

HIS HAND AND HEART

**the Wit and Wisdom
of Marshall Keeble**

**by
Willie Cato**

**Published by
J.C. Choate Publications
Winona/Singapore/New Delhi**

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Willie Cato

First Printing, 2,000 Copies

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Cover Design and Layout, Brad Choate
Printed in U.S.A., 1990

Order From:
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DEDICATION

To his “preacher boys” and to all whose lives have been touched by the wit and wisdom of Marshall Keeble.



Salute to a Special Servant

My wife, Maxine, knowing the life, work, wit, and wisdom of Marshall Keeble, encouraged me to share “the real man” with future generations. She is equally eager to see the lives of young people prepared to serve the Lord.

Gently and enthusiastically she has held up my hands in all of my efforts. She is ready to every “good work” that spreads the borders of

Christ’s Kingdom. Maxine knows that the work done by the Nigerian Christian Bible College, under the direction of African Christian School Foundation, spreads the Kingdom through the hands and hearts of young people who are trained.

God has always been first in her life. I have had the joy and blessing of being in “second place”. It was early in our association with Marshall Keeble that he came to possess a very select place in her heart.

Maxine is truly “a servant of the Church...a helper of many and of mine ownself.”

Willie Cato

THE PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

I personally knew brother Marshall Keeble and I have known brother Willie Cato since the days we attended David Lipscomb College. Because of this background I count it a real honor to have been chosen as the publisher for HIS HAND AND HEART.

Brother Keeble was a unique man. He had a winning personality, a charisma which drew people to him. But instead of allowing pride to take over and make him feel important, to the contrary, brother Keeble was a very humble man, using all of his talents, abilities, and resources to further the cause of Christ. He loved to preach, and preach he did, throughout this country and around the world. Whether in meetings, on college lectureships, or in the heart of Africa, he was always the same—just Marshall Keeble.

He was in great demand among people of both races, making no distinctions. To him, people were souls, and nothing else mattered. He probably did more to break down segregation in the Lord's church than any person living or dead.

Thank God for this spiritual giant and thank you, brother Cato, for sharing these personal experiences with us. We have a greater knowledge and insight of him because of you.

J. C. Choate

Winona, MS

June 1, 1990

INTRODUCTION

I have made no attempt to “research” the life and works of Marshall Keeble. This has been done well by others.

Many hours of my time have been spent “sitting at his feet.” In fact, I often had a private “tutor”— while we were driving down the highway, visiting together in the office, eating together, living together before and after various engagements and on many other occasions.

During these moments, I came to **know the man**. I have seen the deeds of his hands and the expressions of his heart. Many of these truths which fell from his hands and heart may be found between the covers of this book.

It is hoped that every life which is touched by these “tidbits” of wit and wisdom will be as blessed as my life has been.

Willie Cato

PREFACE

Man often looks on the “outside” of another man and formulates an evaluation of that person. God’s evaluation is based on the “inside” of man. It is that part of man on which God looks and in which God is most interested. It is the “inside” of man that determines his acceptability to God. I have seen that part of Marshall Keeble—the “inside”—his hand and heart.

Others have written of his birth, his life, his work, and his death. Some have recorded his sermons, which are still affecting the lives of all who read and hear them. I make no attempt to repeat these efforts. As I sat and listened to the heart of Marshall Keeble and observed the works of his hands, I recorded his “sharp sayings” or “wise sayings” on anything available. I have retained the originals. The sayings were revealed in wit and wisdom. Later, I categorized them. As you read them, you will see they truly reveal the hand and heart of the man. His words mirror his soul.

The proceeds of this book will bless the lives of young men who are preparing to preach the Gospel of Christ. In 1984, African Christian Schools Foundation established the Marshall Keeble Scholarship Fund. This fund is shared with young people attending the Nigerian Christian Bible College in Ukpom, Nigeria, as they prepare themselves for Christian service. The proceeds of this book will be added to the scholarship fund. When brother Keeble and I worked together in behalf of Christian education, he would often say, “Use me while you’ve got me, and then use me in the best way that you can when you don’t have me.”

My ten-year association with Marshall Keeble brought us before good, gracious and generous men and before pupils

whose personalities ultimately personified Christ. The work we did together in behalf of Christian education brought us times of difficulties in divers manners, hardships heavy, joys of jubilant expressions, blessings bountiful, life lively and lovely, lessons frank and full, a "family relationship" (father-son relationship) that was faithful, experiences expected and unexpected, and remembrances rewarding. Together, we worked and wept, laughed and loved, slept and suffered, prayed and planned. In all of these, I saw his hand and heart. God knows the hearts of all men and knows them better than anyone else, but He also permits us to know their hearts. How glad I am!

The hand and heart of Marshall Keeble touched the lives of many, my own in a superlative degree. I am blessed because his love and life touched me. I am a different man because of God's great servant and my brother. He assisted me in bringing my life into disciplined discipleship. I thank God daily for giving me to him and giving him to me, that I might continue to know his heart and to "feel the touch" of his hand. God did not deny me such a "storehouse." It is my hope and prayer that, at least to some degree, the same will happen to you as you read HIS HAND AND HEART, the Wit and Wisdom of Marshall Keeble.

Willie Cato

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Not many works are done by one— but by many. This is certainly true of a book.

My sincere gratitude goes to Peggy Huffman for the original typing and categorizing of the quotations. Later, when transition sentences and phrases were added, Lois Collins typed the manuscript. As corrections and changes were made, Mrs. Collins was always available to make them.

I'm thankful for Bill Lambert of Harding University, who read the manuscript and made suggestions, as well as Kyle Maus of Freed-Hardeman College.

Harvey Hearn also read the manuscript and shared good suggestions. Thanks to him for writing the article "About the Book", which appears on the back page.

There is that great host of people who, knowing my association with Marshall Keeble, encouraged me to share these wonderful moments by putting them in print. Probably no one encouraged me more than my nephew, Baxter Graves, who is also a preacher of the gospel of Christ, and one who appreciates the wit and wisdom of others.

So much of my thanksgiving must go to J.C. and Betty Choate, who were willing to bring to "life" the wit and wisdom from the hand and heart of Marshall Keeble. Also, thanks goes to Connie Lee Krute for assisting in the clearer expression of some of the statements made, and to Brad Choate for his work on the make-up of the appearance of the book itself.

The hands and hearts of all of these, and many others, receive my thanksgiving. After you have read the book, please join me in this thanksgiving, for they deserve it.

Willie Cato

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Dear Sir - I am in Christ, the
Boys and I are well and happy
in Christ, and we hope for all
are well - denying the cross
ings out of heaven's father.
and I hope the school is going
on in a fine way.
I am so glad you are there to
direct the school. THANK GOD
I am sure God sent you to us
and I hope He will permit you
to remain with us a long
long time. Love to the whole staff.
I hope the staff will be encour-
ed by the time we arrive.
The boys are making wonder-
ful impressions on all who
here them, and many parents
are planning on sending
their children next September
to the Lord's Hall, PRAY FOR US.
Sincerely yours in Christ,
16310 N. W. 34 Ave. M. Keerle
Miami, Fla.,

CHAPTER 1

KEEBLE—THE MAN

Marshall Keeble. To many a long-time Christian the name itself raises remembrances of this mighty Black preacher who lived only to serve his Lord and Master. Thoughts of brother Keeble before a crowd, proclaiming the name of Jesus and His plan of salvation, still excite those who have heard the evangelist personally. And to the young Christian, well, maybe Marshall Keeble isn't a familiar name, but it is one well worth knowing.

Although the newer generation of Christians today may not remember the times before racial desegregation, it was during this troubled period in history that I had the privilege of working and travelling with brother Keeble. Many folks didn't understand why a young, white preacher would even be seen in the company of an older black preacher, and sometimes we were treated harshly. Remember, this was back when there was widespread discrimination between the black and white races. But brother Keeble knew no difference in color of a man's skin—he loved all of God's family. I'm so thankful that I had this opportunity to train, to experience, to learn—a time I'll never forget.

I was first associated with brother Keeble in 1960 through the Nashville Christian Institute. Over the next ten years we travelled throughout the country where he boldly preached, in the way only Keeble could preach. As a young preacher I learned a lot about faith, discipline, humility, and my fellow man from brother Keeble. I greatly value those years under his guidance and pray that everyone will have an opportunity such as this at least once in their lifetime.

Before getting into the true “wit and wisdom” of Marshall Keeble, let me give you a little background on this unforgetta-

ble man. I had the privilege of accompanying brother Keeble and his namesake, Marshall Keeble Rose, a student at Nashville Christian Institute and now a gospel preacher, on a visit to Murfreesboro, Tennessee, near Keeble's birthplace. There we met two descendants of the Keeble family. From them we learned quite a bit about Keeble and his ancestors.

Marshall Keeble was born in a log cabin to Robert and Mittie Keeble on December 7, 1878, in Rutherford County, Tennessee. A brother and sister died in infancy. Another brother, Peter, lived to an advanced age.

Keeble's place of birth was in a small community two and a half miles from Murfreesboro, Tennessee. His father, Robert Keeble, had been born into slavery, being owned by John Bell Keeble, who served as dean of Vanderbilt University Law School in Nashville. Some people might have felt sorry for one growing up in such an environment, but from his parents Keeble learned a lot about courage, faith and love.

The formal educational background of Marshall Keeble was somewhat limited— he completed only seven grades of school. But this in no way means that Keeble was uneducated. He knew human nature better than any man I've ever known. Once he told me, "Son, you don't even understand your own people." But, he understood "my people," and "his people," and all the people with whom he came in contact. Keeble was able to love, respect and deal with all mankind with the greatest of ease.

Once I was asked, "What would Keeble have been like if he had received a college education?" Without hesitation I replied, "It would have ruined him!" And I believe it would have, for it just may be that he would have tried to imitate others

His Hand and Heart

or to quote others instead of just being himself. Using his natural abilities in his own way is what made him unique.

For 36 years, Marshall Keeble was married to a lovely Christian woman by the name of Minnie Womack. She was a native of Nashville, Tennessee, and was a graduate of Fisk University High School. Keeble claimed she was his “best teacher.”

Marshall and Minnie first met when the Keeble family lived next door to the Womacks. Marshall fell deeply in love with Minnie and they were married in 1896 in Nashville.

Five children were born to the couple. Two died in infancy. Clarence, while very young, met sudden death when he touched a high voltage wire. A daughter, Elnora, died shortly after her mother’s death, and Robert died in 1964.

Minnie Womack Keeble was a great help in the early days of her husband’s preaching. To partially support the family, Keeble bought a small grocery which was mainly operated by Minnie. He also bought a wagon from which he sold produce in the summer and wood and coal in the winter. However, his gentle wife never complained, and she always encouraged him.

After a few weeks of illness, on December 11, 1932, Minnie Womack Keeble passed away at the age of 53. Her death was a great loss to her husband and children.

While many men never find as good a woman as Minnie Womack, Marshall Keeble was blessed once again when he met and married his second wife, Laura Johnson of Corinth, Mississippi. Knowing from the beginning that her husband would be far away from home for long periods of time, Laura Johnson Keeble never complained. There was plenty to do at home to keep her occupied. She became a very loving mother to his three children and also to the grandchildren, giving them

her greatest love and care. Laura knew that Keeble was doing what he loved to do and what he did best— preaching the Gospel. She loved him dearly and always supported him in his efforts to evangelize the world.



Marshall Keeble

Marshall Keeble knew that man needs others in order to accomplish life's worthy goals. Never did he fail to give credit to Alexander Campbell, another well-known Black preacher

who led the way in the restoration movement among his race. Keeble also gave much credit to S.W. Womack, his father-in-law. Womack was a preacher and encouraged Keeble in his early preaching days. G.P. Bowser, who began Southwestern Christian College (now in Terrell, Texas), was also a great encourager to Keeble in his early evangelistic work.

Others received his just praise and credit for what they did to assist his work. N.B. Hardeman, president of Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, Tennessee, and B.C. Goodpasture, of Nashville, were great partners in fellowship of preaching the Gospel. Keeble never failed to show his love and appreciation for Mr. and Mrs. A.M. Burton, a devoted Christian couple from Nashville who often gave generously to further the cause of our Lord. These and many others "held up his hands" in preaching the Gospel with fervency and with great success.

B.C. Goodpasture captured Marshall Keeble's true spirit as he wrote about "the secret" of Keeble's "power and success" in a book entitled *Biography and Sermons of Marshall Keeble, Evangelist*:

...perhaps the secret of his power and success is to be found in his humble and prayerful walk with God. He believes that "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." In his preaching one sees reflected the devotional spirit of the Psalmist, the glowing fire of the prophets, the evangelistic fervor and zeal of the apostles, and the fearless courage of Him who cleansed the temple. He impresses the listener as one who is mightily in earnest. He seems to feel that woe is unto him if he preaches not the gospel. His mission is to preach Christ and save souls. His heart yearns for the salvation of his people. He is not made proud and boastful by his success and the many complimentary things the

white brethren say to him, but rather made the more humble and the more grateful to an All-wise Father for enabling him to be used for good. He realizes that if he should cease to be meek and humble he would be bereft of his strength, as Samson was when he was shorn of his hair. With him, "the power is in the gospel, not in Keeble."

Every man, woman and child who heard brother Marshall Keeble preach left the assembly knowing that this man believed the Bible. He always contended for the faith once and for all times delivered unto the saints. How many times has brother Keeble shouted, "The Bible is right!" He knew the God he served. He knew that God was always in the plan.

Marshall Keeble preached the Bible from north to south and from east to west. Wherever he went, he was able to identify with "his people." They came to hear, they returned, and many obeyed. Many of the Caucasian race came and, possibly, many came out of curiosity— at least, Keeble often thought so. That's when he would say, "And they got caught in the Gospel net!"

The life and works of Marshall Keeble testify to the character of this humble person. Whenever he associated with man, all appreciated him being a part of their lives.

Throughout brother Keeble's long preaching career honors were bestowed upon him. In West Africa he was made an honorary chief of a large Nigerian tribe. Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas granted Keeble an honorary degree of Doctors of Laws. I had the joy of standing by while Tennessee Governor Frank G. Clement appointed him "Colonel Aide-De-Camp," an honorary colonel on the Governor's staff. In his

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travels around the world brother Keeble was received with honor, joy and thanksgiving.

From the beginning of his work, life was not always kind. But Marshall Keeble never gave up, he always pressed forward. Never did I hear him murmur. Never did I hear him complain. Never did I hear any bitterness fall from his lips. Never did I see any attempts to retaliate. Keeble knew God, and he knew that vengeance belonged to God.

God was Marshall Keeble's Master and he knew the God whom he served. Keeble's Lord was always in the plan. He realized that God knew that people in the Church were not perfect. But brother Keeble kept preaching. He knew that preachers were not perfect, but he also knew that the power was of God, not of man. Never did he find fault with God's Church. He never criticized the Church. He lived to improve the Church. Keeble was soft, but firm. He was not weak, but strong. He was not given to fighting, but to forgiving.

I never knew a man like brother Marshall Keeble. In every area of his life he was above reproach. He had no bad habits. His heart was pure—a fountain of sweetness. He never spoke words of bitterness. Keeble's preaching was strengthened by his daily living. He knew that every commandment given by God was essential, and he realized that Christians were to exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. In no way did brother Keeble ever permit the world to direct his life.

During the week of April 14, 1968 Marshall Keeble spoke on the annual lectureship at Michigan Christian College in Rochester, Michigan. After the lectureship was over, he returned to Nashville by way of Ohio, where he spoke on Wednesday evening, April 17. Thursday, brother Keeble returned to his home in Nashville. On Friday, he autographed a

number of copies of his biography, ***Roll, Jordan, Roll***, written by J.E. Choate. Saturday morning he and his wife, Laura, went shopping. They had the automobile washed. Later that day Keeble wanted to go by to visit a friend of many years, Mrs. Lizzie Ransom, who had served 28 years at Nashville Christian Institute. He just wanted to say a “quick hello.”



Marshall and Laura Keeble

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Upon their return home, sister Laura Keeble began to prepare the evening meal while brother Keeble bathed. He retired to the den and sat down on the couch. It was there that this great warrior for the Lord laid his armor by and began resting from his labors. On this Saturday evening, April 20, 1968, Marshall Keeble's earthly life was over immediately. I felt as if I had lost part of myself.

Funeral services were conducted at the Madison Church of Christ in Madison, Tennessee on Thursday, April 25. The eulogy was delivered by brother B.C. Goodpasture, editor of THE GOSPEL ADVOCATE. Friends and brethren from all over the nation were in attendance. We all grieved at his passing, yet each of us rejoiced at his victory. Brother Keeble's body was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery in Nashville to await the resurrection.

I am so thankful that God did not deny me such a man, a man with a great storehouse of knowledge, good judgment, common sense and righteous living.

CHAPTER 2

PREACHING—THE JOY OF HIS LIFE

The one thing that Marshall Keeble did best and loved most was preaching the Truth of the Almighty. He was always ready to preach. One day, when school was not in session, I walked into the office wearing “sport clothes.” Brother Keeble looked at me and said, “What if someone wanted you to preach today?” I replied, “I would.” He said, “You’re not ready to preach— you’d have to take time to go home and get dressed.” He didn’t think I was ready to preach. He always was. Even his dress confirmed this. Keeble was always clean, well-groomed and neat in appearance. He wanted to be in the best form to handle the greatest thing— the Word of the Almighty.

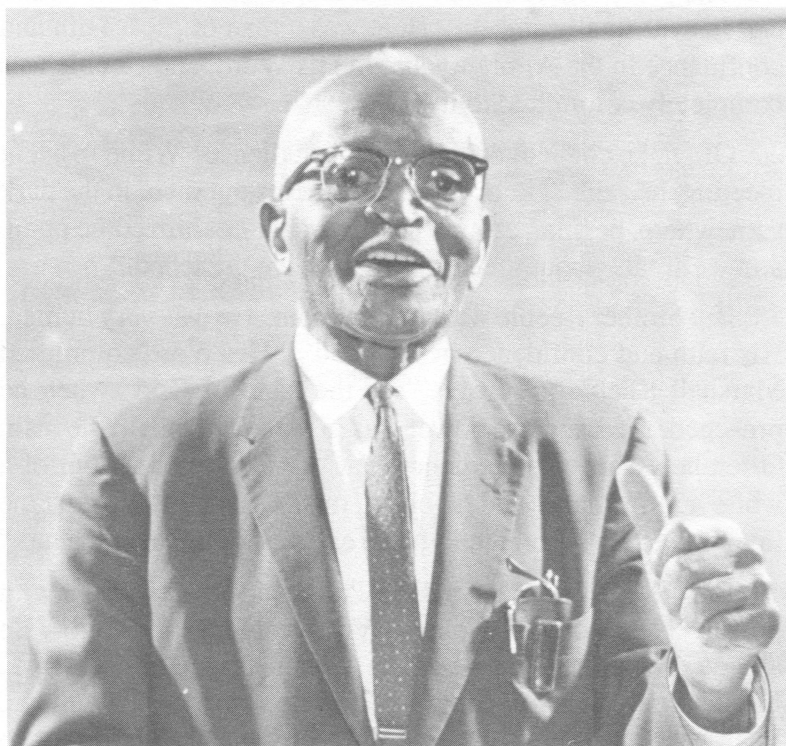
Often while driving to appointments, brother Keeble would see a vacant lot in a city. He would turn to me and say “That would make a great place to stretch a tent and preach for three or four weeks.” If the tent had already been erected, I’m confident we would have remained in that city until he could have preached. He viewed every place with the thought in mind, “Would this be a good place to preach?” Once we were passing through Franklin, Tennessee, at a five-point intersection, and he saw a spot that did not contain a building. Perhaps some who passed that way would have said, “That would be a good location for a business.” But not brother Keeble— he was always ready to “stretch a tent” and preach! He never preached for profit of dollars, but always for the profit of souls.

It pleased brother Keeble when he was “called for a meeting.” Eagerly he would go, with no desire to close early. It was not uncommon for brother Keeble to delay beginning another scheduled meeting because of the harvest of souls where he was currently preaching. Sometimes this didn’t

please the brethren who were “waiting on him,” but he had confidence that it pleased God.

Perhaps in his generation, no man preached as did brother Keeble. His preaching let every man know his belief in the authority of the Bible. I can almost hear him shout,

The Bible is right! You can leave this meeting and go home mad, but the Bible is still right. You can fuss at Keeble all night, but the Bible is right! All men can die and go to Hell, but the Bible is still right.



“The Bible is right!”

Marshall Keeble knew the Bible was right, and if applied to man's illnesses, he could be made well. But he knew if the "medicine" were kept on the shelf, it would do the patient no good. Also he knew the wrong "medicine" would kill that patient. Brother Keeble knew that the "medicine" had to be applied; sometimes that meant positive application and sometimes negative application. He knew it was absolutely true and that it was all intended for man's benefit. Keeble did not "play" church; with a shout he taught the way to the Father.

When Marshall Keeble preached, you knew he believed what he preached. He knew what he preached was the Truth, and he was totally sincere. Here was a man of great faith and confidence in the Almighty and in His Word, and Keeble was completely committed to it.

Often, he challenged those in the audience. While in a tent meeting, he said, "I know your preacher is out there in the dark somewhere, peeping around behind a car. Let him come on in, and we'll talk about the things that I have preached."

But brother Keeble was no superman. He was very human. His faith and confidence in God and in His Word committed Marshall Keeble to always "see the hand of God" when he preached. He knew the power was in the Word, not in the man. Often he assured the audience that "a piece of bread out of a white man's hand and a black man's hand has the same ingredients. It's the bread you're eating, not the man's hand."

Brother Keeble preached the Truth, and he preached it with power. Never did he apologize for preaching the Truth. He always proclaimed It in the greatest manner of dignity and love. Keeble knew that you could not overstock yourself with love. I can hear him say, "I have never seen a man with too much love."

Marshall Keeble had the spirit to praise others. Credit was given to those who deserved it. He was never selfish with words. Keeble used the power of encouragement, and the power to discern opportunities for praise and commendation. After being introduced at a service, brother Keeble would say, "Everybody loves to be praised; even a dog will wag his tail when you praise him."

Though he was often challenged by preachers from various religious groups who attended his meetings, he never retracted the Truth, never regretted speaking the Truth, and never apologized for defending the Truth.

The sermons brother Keeble preached were simple and easy to understand. Even though many sermons were on the same basic subjects, such as faith, repentance, and baptism, he always "dressed them up."

People came in large numbers to hear brother Keeble speak the Truth in love. Brother Keeble always appreciated his audience and he told them so in a most sincere manner. Each night during a tent meeting in Cookeville, Tennessee, Virgil Bennett, a white man, brought a pitcher of water and a glass and set them on the table in front of the pulpit where Keeble was preaching. Brother Keeble later said, "I don't ordinarily drink much water, but the very first night he brought it, I jumped down and drank two glasses. I wanted to show my appreciation. Two nights later, I baptized him. He is still faithful today." Years later, brother Keeble and I were invited to the home of brother and sister Bennett. We were received graciously and entertained royally. A delicious steak dinner with all the trimmings was served to us. This was how the Bennetts' showed their appreciation for brother Keeble.

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Sometimes Marshall Keeble permitted visiting preachers of various religious groups to speak for a short period of time. He always permitted them to speak first. This not only showed his appreciation for their presence, but it also gave him the opportunity to “answer” anything he felt needed to be discussed. It often gave him the opportunity to let the audience hear Truth placed alongside error.

Many have said that brother Keeble would have made a great entertainer, for certainly there were times he “entertained” his audience. He was a man of wit and wisdom, often speaking in parables and proverbs. Sometimes he laughed at his own wit and marvelled at his own parables. The nature of his preaching captured and held the attention of his hearers. With his wit, he demanded their attention, and with his wisdom, he won their souls.

Brother Keeble loved to preach under a tent, and he always wanted to use a public address system. According to Keeble the public address system would let him speak to those who would not come under the tent— who felt they would “hide in the dark” or “sit on the front porch” or maybe even go inside and shut the door. He would say, “Let them shut their doors—I’ll shoot it through the keyhole.”

The life which Marshall Keeble lived was strengthened by his preaching. He kept himself above reproach. His “hand and heart” were as clean and pure as the driven snow. Brother Keeble knew there were no non-essential commands. He knew that if God put the command in the Bible, it was up to man to learn it and to take time to do it. He did. Never was he concerned about someone who might think him “over zealous, over religious, or over aggressive” for the cause of Christ. The Christian’s duty was to “exceed the righteousness of the scribes

and the Pharisees,” and Brother Keeble said the word “exceed” means that “we’ve got to beat ’em.”

The world was not permitted to direct Marshall Keeble’s life. He said, “The worst man in town will respect you if you deserve it. Even a bootlegger will respect you if you deserve it. But you start drinking the man’s stuff, and you’re gone, sho’nuf gone.” Brother Keeble wanted all who came to Christ to live in such a way that they could be samples he could “hand to people” in that city. He always told them, “You don’t have to get an education or be rich in order to be recognized, but you do have to get Christ in you, and then people will bow, not to you, but to Christ.” Brother Keeble lived a life of “bowing to Christ.” Christ directed his life.

Never did Marshall Keeble preach the Gospel without exhorting all to be obedient to God. He assured people that “when a man wants to obey the Gospel, all the devils in Hell can’t hold him.”

The Christians were encouraged to be faithful. Brother Keeble would tell them, “People in this town are watching you.” Hundreds would be baptized in some of the cities when brother Keeble preached the first time. Later he would return to that same city, and not as many would respond to the Lord’s invitation. Someone asked brother Keeble why he didn’t baptize as many people as he did before. He answered, “When I went there the first time, there were no Christians. Now, when I go back, they have gotten in the way, and they’ve been standing in the way all these years. They just won’t live right.”

To one who had never obeyed the Gospel, Keeble would say, “If you’re not ashamed, then come. If you are ashamed, then stay where you are, for God couldn’t use you anyway.”

However, he wanted no man to be ashamed, and he wanted all men everywhere to be saved. That's why he preached.

Brother Keeble's life of preaching was a life of reliance upon God. As a man of prayer, Keeble prayed before each message—he never preached without praying. He would say,

We preach more than we believe—we preach, "All things work together for good to those that love the Lord," but we've got to live like we believe it. We must not act like we don't believe it. We must keep in mind that God's hand is in it all. It is. It was in the fiery furnace.

One day, while we were riding down a highway, brother Keeble assured me, "If there's a man anywhere that God has taken care of, it's me. I often found myself in my enemies' hands, and I had no one but God to take care of me, but He has done it." Brother Keeble related many of the difficult experiences he encountered while preaching the Gospel. I was led to ask him, "Brother Keeble, how have you made it?" He told me, "God—that's how, God! The Negro didn't like my religion, and the white man didn't like the color of my skin. So I had to rely on God." I then came to know why his favorite song was "Hold to God's Unchanging Hand." Marshall Keeble held God's hand all his life while preaching for the One who took care of him.

Brother Keeble wanted to die preaching. Once when planning a trip to Nigeria, some tried to discourage him from going, but Keeble wanted to go to preach to "his folks." Another time he made a trip around the world and some did not want him to make that journey. They felt he was too old and that he might die while he was gone. Neither was a concern to brother Keeble; he did not care where he died, as long as he was

preaching. He wanted to die preaching, and he almost did. Marshall Keeble's final sermon was delivered on Wednesday evening, April 17, 1968. On Saturday, April 20, he ceased from a life of preaching, for the Hand which he had held led him home.

Keeble preached! He preached with power! He knew the Bible was right. Though he be dead, yet he seems to speak. I can almost hear him say, "Lord, if you need any preaching done, I'll be glad to do it."

"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Romans 10:15.)



Shoes worn by Marshall Keeble

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Mr Willie T. Cato,

Dear Sir, - I Bro in

Christ.

I hope your family are

well & happy in Christ.

Many thanks for bringing me

up here.

I dated last from you

He will leave tomorrow

at 1. P.M. for Africa.

Since coming in Detroit

have responded to the

Gospel here since being

here.

THANK GOD

I'm feeling fine.

Please pray for us.

Bro Eaton ask me to

speak at the school at 10 A.M

tomorrow.

I hope Bro & Sister Burton

are well, and the school

going fine.

CHAPTER 3

THE MAN KEEBLE— HIS HAND AND HEART

What kind of a person endures hardships? Perhaps some insight into the nature of such a person can be gained from the life of the apostle Paul. He spoke of himself as a servant— more accurately translated “a slave”— of Jesus Christ. Marshall Keeble was also owned by Christ, having been bought with a price. He was directed by Christ. As a servant would report to his master in the morning seeking instructions for the day, so brother Keeble reported to the Master of Heaven and earth to receive instructions each and every day of his life.

From a study of Paul’s life, it seems evident that his relationship with Christ as Master was voluntary. He was bound by a special tie of love to His service. That is why Paul freely gave himself. The chains of love bound him tighter than mere metal bonds could ever bind.

It was the same with Marshall Keeble.

Brother Keeble was born of slave parents, and the early days of his life were none too comfortable. Living conditions were not the easiest. In telling of those days, brother Keeble said, “Some folks grew up without ‘running water’. We had ‘running water’. We had to run to get it!”

Those hardships did not end early in life for brother Keeble. His days of preaching were none too comfortable either. Nor were they very convenient. One time he went to Mississippi to hold a meeting. There was no congregation of Christians meeting in that town, and he was the only Christian among the black people. The white brethren provided a tent, but no chairs. The tent was erected near a railroad track and near the track lay

a large stack of railroad cross-ties. Brother Keeble went to the railroad foreman and asked if he could borrow the cross-ties and explained the usage of them. The foreman gave permission, with the understanding that brother Keeble would return them at the end of the meeting to the same place he had gotten them. Brother Keeble agreed. He carried each cross-tie to the tent and arranged them so they could be used for benches. After all of the cross-ties had been carried to the tent, brother Keeble discovered that the skin had been worn away from his shoulder and blood was running down his back and chest. In spite of the circumstances, Keeble preached the Word.

Brother Keeble often preached for little or no money. He commented about one of these occasions:

When I first went to Hickman County, Tennessee to preach, they didn't give me money. I'd get a few rabbits, a bucket of molasses and a few spare ribs. I'd put 'em in a hemp sack and go on home. My children would be glad to see me.

Any available mode of transportation was used by Marshall Keeble to get to a meeting. Sometimes he would have to walk in mud while carrying his shoes. Other times he would ride in a wagon, and there would be more dust on him than on the road. Often when he arrived at the train depot, someone would meet him with two mules, one for him and one for the person who had come for him. He would tell how that he had "cooned" a log across a raging creek in order to preach to the saints. Keeble rode trains or buses, and on many occasions there would be no place for him to eat and no restrooms available to him.

Brother Keeble bore the marks of those who opposed his preaching, as he describes in this story:

Once I was preaching and a gentleman, I'll call him a gentleman, for he thought that he was, came into the pulpit and hit me with a pair of brass knuckles. I love him today. I thought then, it may be the greatest thing that ever happened to me. If I could keep hate out and love in and love him, it would be the greatest thing that could happen. He staggered me when he hit me, but I never stopped preaching. At the invitation, seven men came to obey the Gospel.

The next day, the law enforcement officers of the city came to where I was staying and wanted me to swear out a warrant against the man. They explained that they did not want any visitor in their city to be treated in this manner. I refused to swear out the warrant. The white church had sent for me to preach to my race, not to fight. I could have sworn out the warrant, but people would not have come and listened to my preaching. I knew I had to take it. Sometimes, we have to take it when we serve the Lord.

Annie Tuggle, a dear sister who served the Lord in a very fine way, said,

I have seen the courage of Marshall Keeble in tents with guns drawn and pointed at him, yet he stood "flat-footed" and preached the Gospel. Also, I have been under the tent when rocks were thrown at the tent.

While brother Keeble had men opposing him and the work he did for the Lord, he was also a man with many faithful friends. Someone asked him how he got so many friends. He said, "I left it up to Christ, and he gave 'em to me."

Actually, his life "demanded" friends. However, not everybody understood Keeble's life, and so that left him with a

few enemies. But he knew how to deal with them. He told about a brother who owed him some money:

He owed me \$50, and he had owed me for a long time. He mentioned it to me, but didn't pay me. If I'd told him how long he'd owed it, he'd have gotten mad and said a lot of mean things, so I've just let it go. I've left that '\$50 cork' stay in his mouth. They ain't gonna get me to push that cork any farther, for if I do, I'll bust that jug and get that stuff all over me.

Marshall Keeble always told his brethren,

When mean things happen to you, don't get angry, just pray for him, then go off and live so your prayers will be answered. Live so your friends won't believe it, and your enemies can't prove it.

That is exactly the manner in which Marshall Keeble lived!

Marshall Keeble was a man of great love. He had a heart filled with love, and that love is best seen in situations that arose in his daily life.

A brother in the Church came to brother Keeble's office to tell him what another brother was saying about him. Keeble listened, but made no response. He simply changed the subject and began talking about other things. The brother mentioned it again and told Keeble the second time what the other brother was saying. Brother Keeble listened and finally said, "Don't kill him! I'm going to overcome him. He is going to be the means of my salvation."

Then he turned to me and said, "Given enough time, the truth will always be known. And remember, right always prevails."

One afternoon, two white ladies brought several boxes of sheets, pillowcases and quilts to brother Keeble's office at Nashville Christian Institute. These were to be used by the boys in the dormitory. As I left that afternoon, I stopped by his office to tell him goodbye. I found him bending over, exploring the contents of one of the boxes. Under the quilts and blankets, in the center of the box, were several cans of a name-brand cranberry sauce. Just a few days earlier, there had been a "cancer scare" which was widely publicized by the news media. Some research had been done in the area of cranberries, and someone had come up with the conclusion that cranberries possibly caused cancer. As I stood behind brother Keeble waiting to bid him goodbye, he said, "Ah, well, you can't kill us 'niggers' no how."

Then brother Keeble stood up, turned around, looked at me and chuckled loudly. He knew all the time that I was standing there— his way of having a bit of fun with me. But perhaps we both saw an attitude that had come to "our house" that day.

People could be so cruel to brother Keeble and to me. I learned a lot about tolerance from this patient teacher. Brother Keeble and I had been at Abilene Christian College in Texas where he had spoken on the lectureship. We arose early and made our way to the Abilene airport in order to return to Nashville. When we arrived, we found that the plane was late, and that no breakfast would be served on the plane. We agreed we would have a light breakfast in the airport restaurant. The waitress took our order and served us in a very stern and business-like fashion. After we finished, we paid our bill and went to the waiting room. Brother Keeble loved to keep up with current events, and he always read the morning newspaper. He turned to me and asked, "Son, did you get me a newspaper?" I had forgotten to buy the morning newspaper,

so I returned to the restaurant, got the newspaper, went to the cash register to pay, when the same young lady who had served our breakfast burst forth with a barrage of insults and inappropriate descriptions of each of us. I was able to leave with only mental bruises and, fortunately, brother Keeble never knew of the incident.

After a two-week visit among the brethren in Texas, we, along with brother Dryden Sinclair of Western Christian College in Saskatchewan, Canada, left the brethren in Beaumont and began a journey to Dallas. Along the way, it began to rain. It was past midnight, and we were weary. We stopped in Palestine, Texas, in order to buy gasoline. Nearby was a motel. We wondered if we could secure lodging for the rest of the night. Brother Keeble agreed we could try, but warned us it might not be possible. We went into the motel. A young man was at the desk, and we explained to him who we were, what we did, and that we would be leaving early. We checked into the motel at 1:30 a.m. We were awakened at 4:00 a.m. by an older man. I was soundly asleep, but was able to hear knocks on the door and could even hear brother Keeble say, "Son, there's somebody at your door."

Brother Keeble repeated this three times, while the knocking continued. Finally, I was alert enough to go to the door. When I opened it, there stood a white man, perhaps fifty years old. He asked, "Do you have a 'nigger' in here?" Brother Keeble immediately said, "Yes." The man said, "I'll have to ask you to leave." I told him of our conversation with the young man at the desk, telling him who we were, what we did, and that we stopped because we were weary and needed to rest before continuing our journey into Dallas. I explained to him that it was raining, and being weary, we felt it was safer for us to stop rather than to continue our journey. Assuring him that

we would cause no trouble, I continued to reason with the man, hoping that he would permit us to stay.

But there was no reasoning with him. Pointing to brother Keeble, he said, "He must leave. I'll give him his money back." I asked, "What do you mean 'HE' must leave, and you'll give 'HIS' money back?" I asked, "What about my money?" He explained to me that I did not have to leave and that he would not return my money. I explained to him, that if Keeble left, I would also leave. He assured me I could stay. I told him, "I brought him here, and if he leaves, I'll go with him." He said, "You can go, but I won't give 'YOU' your money back."

By this time, brother Keeble was practically dressed and ready to leave. When he heard the man tell me that I did not have to go, but if I chose to go, he would not give me my money back, he said, "Son, you heard him, he wants us to leave. Let him keep the money. We'll get some more."

We left and drove to Dallas without any discussion of the incident on the way. After our activities in Dallas, brother Keeble and I caught a plane to Nashville. When we began our descent for landing at the Nashville airport, brother Keeble chuckled and asked me, "Have you ever been thrown out of a motel? I told him that I had been. Again, he chuckled and then asked, "Did you have a 'nigger' with you?" I said, "Well, the man said I did." Brother Keeble again chuckled and then said,

I sympathize with that man at the motel. He doesn't know any better. Now don't you get mad at him. If you do, you'll be worse off than he is. He just doesn't know any better. Never be offended, but pray for those kind of folks. A Christian can't be insulted.

Then brother Keeble bowed his head and prayed, “Lord, bless those that despise us until Thou seest fit for it to stop, and we know that Thou hast the power.”

I remembered brother Keeble telling me about his early life— neither too comfortable nor too convenient. He told me about many of his experiences while serving the Lord— preaching His Word to those who had never heard it and often being offended by both races. I always wished that the Lord would see fit to stop such action.

When we would travel, there would be those who would tell brother Keeble, “Sorry, we have no restrooms for colored folks.” It was always necessary to find restrooms with an outside entrance. I would secure the key, unlock the door, go in, come out and leave the door ajar. Then brother Keeble could enter.

Once, while traveling with some of the “preacher boys” at Nashville Christian Institute to attend a lectureship at Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas, we stopped in Little Rock, Arkansas, to eat. We hardly knew where to eat and finally brother Keeble suggested that we go to the train depot.

When we got there, I went in one place; he and the young men traveling with us went in another place. I sat down at the counter, and it wasn’t long until I heard brother Keeble’s voice. I leaned over as far as I could and peeked around the partition. My eyes met the eyes of brother Keeble, and he chuckled and said, “We look like a bunch of monkeys.” We were separated by a thin piece of plywood. How ridiculous! It was not unusual for us to have to secure our meals from the restaurant, take them outside and use the hood of the car or the tailgate of the station wagon for a table.

In a letter received from Dr. George Benson, President of Harding College in Searcy, Arkansas, he related one of his experiences with brother Keeble:

When I was traveling alone with brother Keeble, we were at Altus, Oklahoma, and went together into a restaurant. I said to the girl at the desk, "We want lunch for two." She pointed at brother Keeble and said he would have to eat in the basement. I said, "Okay, set the table there for two and I'll eat with him." I never said a word to brother Keeble about it; he never said a word to me about it. We went to the basement and had a good dinner together. We chatted while we ate, and then went on our way. I thought that was a measure of the greatness of Keeble. He could have expressed anger, but he didn't express any ill feelings at all. I thought it best not to raise the question as long as he didn't, so neither of us mentioned it again after we had left the girl at the desk with the understanding we would eat together in the basement.

Finally, the day came when the Federal Housing Act was passed by Congress, which permitted people of all races to eat and stay in public facilities. Shortly afterward, brother Keeble and I were driving to a lectureship in Indianapolis, Indiana. We were on the toll road between Elizabethtown and Louisville, Kentucky. On this toll road were two service islands. Each contained a nice restaurant. When we came to the northernmost service island we went in, sat down, and ordered coffee and doughnuts. We were received and treated graciously by the waitress. We were relaxed, and we enjoyed our food and fellowship. As we left the restaurant, brother Keeble said, "That was nice. You know, son, we could've been doing this all along. We wouldn't have hurt anybody."

Had a prolonged period of difficulty and hardship really ended? Would service be available for brother Keeble and for others of minority groups? No, not completely. But things were changing, and changing for the better. That pleased brother Keeble and me; I'm sure it pleased many others.

On brother Keeble's 86th birthday, a group of friends gathered for a luncheon. He spoke and assured them,

I've never murmured or complained at anything that ever happened to me. I've just stood still while God handled it, and He's brought me this far. The people of Israel murmured and complained, and God told them, "Stand still, I'll handle it."

When brother Keeble was 87, he told his friends, "I want God to use me as long as I live, and I want to live so that God can use me."

As one looks at the life and service of Marshall Keeble, it is evident he reflected the life and service of Paul. He knew that many were aliens and foreigners and strangers. He earnestly wanted them made "nigh to Christ" by the blood of Christ. So he became an instrument in the hands of the Lord in bringing about man's reconciliation to his Maker. All the while, he had the attitude of deep humility— "unto me, who am least of all the saints." He depended on God. He was God's man. He gave God all the credit.

I was once asked what made Marshall Keeble a great preacher. My mind began to turn rapidly, and it seemed that a list of things appeared on the "screen." However, after "reading them," I decided that none was correct. The real reason lay in something still greater: NO man and NO thing mastered Marshall Keeble, ONLY the Master Himself.

Oct-18-67 Mrs Willie T. Gato.
Springfield Mo. 801 24th Ave E
Dr. Feeble. Nashville Tenn
1318 S. Delaware.

Phone 60135
CODE 65803

Dear Sir, I Bro in Christ.
I hope this message find you &
your little family well and happy.
I miss you so very much, because
you have been a blessing to me.
I hope some day we can travel to
gather like we have for 12
years and bring many souls
to Christ. You have been a good
God has so wonderfully blessed
us in doing Him be at the blessing
of life, because they come from
His grace. Praise His name.
I am here in wonderful, over-
800 to 900 every night, so your in-
terest is high, over 1000 last night.
Will close Sunday night if the Lord.
Will and arrive tomorrow day if
the Lord will. Hope to see you.
The Church is interested & they are
working hard, and give out every
the day, doctors and nurses, Amen.
Brother White is the minister here, for
I am staying in the home of one of the
white Elders, he is a very nice
man. I hope to see you soon.

Truly yours,
Mr. Feeble
and Pray Co.

P.S. Bro. Gato, I will call you
Monday. Please.
I hope to see you
Monday.

CHAPTER 4

THE BIBLE— THE GOSPEL HE TAUGHT

No man ever contended more strongly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto mankind than brother Marshall Keeble. A feeling of awe came over anyone hearing him almost shouting:

The Bible is right! You can go home and fuss all night, but the Bible is right! You can walk the streets and call Keeble a fool, but the Bible is right! You can go home and have spasms, but the Bible is right! If we all die and go to Hell, the Bible is still right!

No man ever doubted that he believed the Bible was right. To hear him preach the Gospel was positive proof that he believed it. Often when quoting a favorite scripture, brother Keeble would say, "That ain't maybe, that's IT!"

Brother Marshall Keeble had a clear understanding of the Bible. He knew there was an Old Testament and a New Testament, and he believed them both. He understood their relationship to each other and to mankind. Brother Keeble explained his understanding plainly:

The Law of Moses is like a shadow of a ham hanging in the smokehouse. You don't go after the shadow, you go after the ham. You ought not to go after the Law—go after the real thing, the Gospel.

Uncle Sam decided to take all the curves out of the highway—Jesus did this 2,000 years ago and gave a "straight and narrow way." He gave us the Gospel.

Why was there a great noise on Pentecost? God wanted them to know He was arriving. Everybody came to see what all the noise was about, and then Peter slapped the Gospel on 'em.

The book of Acts is a medicine to cure you— to turn you from a disease. The epistles are tonic. There are 21 bottles. You take the tonic and it builds you up and makes you strong and keeps you free from disease. The book of Revelation lets you know whether you're going to get there or whether you're not.

Brother Keeble knew the Gospel of Christ was the Law of Christ, and he knew that when a thing was lawful, it was legal. He knew that for a law to become law, it had to be signed. Keeble spoke of this Law:

Everything in the Law of God has been signed by Christ—signed with the blood of Christ, and that makes it legal.

Peter, I'll give you the keys, but you don't know how to use them yet. I'll show you— I'll show you with power.

In Joppa, there were two Simons in the same house— one of them was a preacher and the other one was a tanner. Don't get the tanner, be sure to get the right one. They may look alike— even have the same name, but just one of 'em has got the key.

Christ brought the keys and left them with Peter. Now, there's no need to get down on your knees and ask for 'em, of course, the problem is that many men don't know where the keys are. Somebody needs to tell men where the keys are.

If you see a man praying, down rolling and foaming at the mouth, that man ain't got the keys. What's he got? Homemade keys.

A lady in Oklahoma City came out next door and put her key under a flower pot. I was sitting on the front porch and saw her do it. A man came to the house at 12:00 and went to the front door and then to the back door, and after that, he started to leave. I figured he'd been to work and had come home to eat lunch. I said, "Mister, are you looking for the key?" I didn't much want to tell him, because I thought he would think I was meddling in his business. But I did. I said, "It's under the pot." I let him in. How'd I do it? With the key. If you know where the keys are, you can still let people in, but you can't do it without meddling.

Brother Keeble often preached about the Ethiopian. The Ethiopian needed someone to help him understand. He knew the Ethiopian didn't rely on feelings or friends. The heart of the Ethiopian motivated brother Keeble's heart, and he often shared his feelings about hearing the Gospel:

I could be at the bank in the morning, and they could have a million dollars in the vault, and I'd still be dead broke. I couldn't work the combination. I'd need some directions and a guide. It's the same with the Gospel. You need a guide so you can be saved.

The Gospel is so plain, a man in the asylum can understand it. Oh, his mind may come and go, but if it does, he can catch it coming even if he loses it while it's going.

You don't have to be smart to obey the Gospel— just honest.

Brother Keeble knew that the Gospel was a guide, and when he spoke of that Guide, he would say:

It took a light to lead the wise men to Christ— a light will lead wise men to Christ today.

Don't follow your Momma. Follow Jesus. He knows how to get to Heaven. He's made the round trip. Your Momma don't know the way to Heaven— she's never been there.

Jesus has given the Gospel as a signpost, directing the way. If you got the signpost, you got the light of the Gospel— no need running around in the dark. When you find the signpost, you don't get down and pray, you follow the sign.

An insurance company pays only when there is a policy in effect. Not when the man says, "I think she was insured." They don't go by feeling or thinking, they must know...you'd better have the policy.

A man don't get to the next town by getting out there and feeling of the highway. Why, he'd get run over. Now, don't try to go to Heaven like that. Get a roadmap. You'll get to messing around out there and feeling around, and you're going to get run over!

Like cans on a shelf, you don't feel them to see what's in 'em, cause a can of lye and a can of beans feel the same. You read the label. The same is true of the Bible, you have to read the label.

You have five clocks— all show a different time. What can you do? Well, we'll check Western Union. So

you've got several different religions. What can you do? Check the Bible. The Bible is right.

I used to sell watermelons. If I would let a customer plug the melon, he would buy it. A doctrine that won't stand "plugging" is not the Gospel of Christ. When the customer plugged the watermelon, it proved it was ripe. When we plug the Bible, that proves it is right—prove all things, then hold fast to that which is good.

Marshall Keeble gave his life to training preachers. He knew the value of trained men and everywhere he went, he encouraged men to prepare themselves to preach the Gospel. Often he would speak to them:

Lift up Christ, and he will do the drawing—too many of us preachers lift ourselves up and as a result, we don't draw anything.

Give the honor to the Word. The power is in the Word, and still some people will stand up and say he did it—give the Word the credit. The Gospel is what does it, not man.

Preachers need to preach the Truth—bear down on it. We don't need to make friends, we need to save souls.

Preach the Word as it is written without fear or favor, without compromise. Any congregation that has a preacher like that, well, you ought to love him to death. God will bless him and make that congregation strong.

The Lord called people straight out hypocrites and blind guides. Some of my own members criticize me for talking straight.

Too many preachers have let the Church make cowards out of them.

The Gospel has power, great power. All It needs is someone to preach It— someone with courage to tell it just like it is.

What does it mean to preach the Gospel in season and out of season? Well, in season— when they like, out of season— when they don't like it. With many folks, the Gospel is almost out of season today.

You can't set a hen on a brown leghorn's eggs and expect white leghorn chickens. Neither can you plant man-made doctrine in the hearts of men and women and expect Christians. The Word of God— the Gospel— is the seed of the Kingdom, and it will produce Christians every time— but that's all it will produce!

Everywhere he went Brother Keeble exhorted everyone to preach the Word— nothing more and nothing less:

A check must be endorsed. If you don't believe it, go to the bank tomorrow without the check being signed and see how much change you get back. It's like that about going to Heaven. Just try to go on to Heaven without what is written— take along something that's not written and on record, and see how much reward you get. It's got to be signed! You sure had better get it signed!

Peter argued with God, and God said, "Rise, Peter, slay and eat." Peter said, "I ain't never eat that stuff." He argued with God. We're just like Peter, we argue with God.

When Moses was told to stretch out that stick over the Red Sea, Moses didn't meddle with God. We're too meddlesome! We always want to meddle in God's business. Why, to listen to us, you'd think we're smarter than God. We tell men to do stuff that ain't never been in the Bible.

Men whose "prison walls are shaken" are shaken by God— they let God do the shaking, then they are released— set free.

The world of Brother Keeble was anywhere and everywhere, with anybody and everybody. He often pointed out God's love for all races:

God can be compared to a cook who bakes bread. Sometimes he bakes the bread well done, sometimes half done and sometimes he just leaves it undone.

Some of you sitting out there right now know what Duke's Mixture is. I can tell by looking at you, even by the way you smell— it's the name of smoking tobacco, you know what it is. Well, when we preach to Canadians, Americans, Africans and to us Negroes, well, that's a "Duke's Mixture." Everybody needs to be included in that mixture.

While brother Keeble preached the Gospel with power, he knew that the POWER which he preached would not be received by everybody and, if IT were received IT would not be received graciously. He spoke of these feelings like this:

I'm serving a warrant on you trying to get you to yield to the Great Judge before it's too late. Don't get mad at the man who serves the warrant— he's just trying to do his job. He is simply telling you that you're in trouble.

When I was a boy, my mother made starch out in the back yard in an old black pot. My mother made me stir the starch. You know why? So it wouldn't scorch. Brethren, I'm stirring you so you won't scorch. If the devil gets you, he will sho' scorch ya!

Even with the power of the Gospel and all of the love that brother Keeble could muster when he preached it, he knew that many would still be inclined to follow family tradition. He spoke of it:

The Gospel is quick, powerful and sharp, so sharp it'll cut you loose from the religion of your Momma and your Daddy.

If I use the Gospel plow, it'll plow up anybody who is rooted and grounded in anything, even Grandpa.

But brother Keeble knew that if one accepted the Gospel, many blessings would follow. His descriptive terms were unique:

The Gospel is an ambulance bringing the sick to the hospital. An attendant is sent along with the ambulance to administer to the sick while en route— that's the preacher sent along with the Gospel. The fellow who is sick must take a bath when he comes into the hospital, even if he's just had one. Why? He's got germs. He either has an operation— baptism— or is put on a tonic, given 21 bottles of it (21 Epistles), then he goes home a new man.

If I'm not too sick and just in a weak condition, they might give me a couple of them kind of pills and then another pill known as the "gosPILL."

If you get out of fix during the week, it's made so that you can go to the Bible and operate on yourself. The Sword of the Spirit will cut it out of you!

The Gospel is a shock absorber. It lets you go over the bumps real smooth.

The love Marshall Keeble had for the Gospel of our Master was intense and he wanted everyone to share that same love. He knew that if love abounded on the part of all, the forces of evil would fail:

When the children of Israel marched around the walls of Jericho, they shouted. They made a great noise! Then the walls fell! When the walls of sectarianism fall, it will be when we Christians let the world really know that we love the Gospel.

I like to hear the "amens" out there from the audience. If you go to a football game and don't yell, then the man next to you asks, "Don't you like football?" We need to let all of our neighbors know we like God and His Gospel.

I never told nobody not to shout— go ahead and shout if you really want to. I've been asked, "Brother Keeble, why don't they shout at one of your services?" They can't— I preach the Gospel, and it's like lead. It's heavy. It holds a fellow down. He can't bounce and jump around. If you preach a lot of error, it's light and it'll bounce around like cotton— nothing to hold it down.

Did you know your automobile could preach? Yes, it does! You look like you don't believe it. Your cars are out there right now preaching. They let the folks know around here and those who are passing by that you are

in here hearing the Gospel— that there's something good going on in here.

Now, I know that sometimes you want to stop hearing the Gospel. Sometimes when you play basketball and football, they stop the clock. That's what the church of Christ needs to do. We say, "Watch the clock." And, we do it—we wear out our pockets looking at the watch. What we really need to do is to get our minds off the clock and get it on Christ.

Many things thrilled Marshall Keeble. He was perhaps the happiest when preaching the Gospel. He was never ashamed to let people know of his joy in being a Gospel preacher. He proved it by saying:

I'm one preacher who enjoys his own preaching. Why, I get happy over my own preaching when I do it like God wants it done.

Let me enjoy this. Ah, you may not be enjoying it—you may want to go home, but I'm happy. Here are two "boys" [the Guthrie brothers were members of Jackson Street Church of Christ in Nashville, TN where brother Keeble preached for many years]. I saw them come out of a church that was not in the Bible. I baptized them with my own hands. Now, they are preaching the Gospel. Everywhere I go, it's the same thing. Why shouldn't I be happy?

Peter and John were Gospel preachers. They were dead broke. I never saw a preacher who wasn't broke, and the elders are gonna see that he stays broke. Yet, I wouldn't swap jobs with the President— of course, they ain't no chance for me to swap with him, but I wouldn't if I could!

His Hand and Heart

It was in the world and on the world— God's footstool, that brother Keeble lived. But on top of that world was brother Keeble's "footstool"— the Bible:

I'd rather be standing on God's Word than on the heavens and the earth, for the heavens and the earth shall pass away, but Jesus says, "My words will never pass away."

Yes, Marshall Keeble knew the Bible was right. And did he ever preach it!!!

CHAPTER 5

THE CHURCH— HIS GREATEST LOVE

If any man ever had a passion for Christ and His Church, the body of Christ, it was Marshall Keeble. You never doubted that love, any more than you doubted his love for his wife. You never doubted which Church was right any more than you doubted which woman was his wife. Brother Keeble knew that many men believed that all “churches are right,” and that “we’re all one.” Brother Keeble thought that kind of reasoning was as ridiculous as thinking that every woman he met was his wife. He would often say, “Why, if I believed that, I’d be a monkey.” He knew there was one Church, and he contended fervently for that one—the one bought by Christ, paid for by Christ and bearing the name of Christ, the one to which men were added when they obeyed Christ.

Brother Keeble’s understanding of the Scriptures was so clear that his proverbs concerning the Church were equally clear:

There was a conference in Heaven— God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. They reasoned that the world was in bad shape. Then they decided which one would go down in order to change things, so the Spirit was sent.

I know the Church is Heaven-bought, Hell-proofed, rock-bottomed and Holy Ghost-filled.

The Church is the only Church paid for—the only one. All the other churches are in the devil’s hand, and he has a mortgage on ’em, and one day, he’s going to foreclose.

When one heard Marshall Keeble speak about Christ and His Church, there was no doubt of which one he spoke. His words of wisdom revealed it clearly:

I'd rather be in the Church that belongs to one who can raise the dead. John couldn't raise the dead.

John, the Baptist, died and never got up. I don't want to be in any man's church who can't get up. The man who owns the Church I'm a member of laid down His life and took it up again. He had more power than before. He had ALL power! Jesus is coming back again. John ain't never gonna come back.

A lady asked, "What is the difference between my church and you all's church?" I said, "Not a bit of difference. If you've got one and we've got one, there ain't no difference at all. Neither one is any good."

While I was a-coming here, I passed by a building and out front, there was a sign that said, "The A.M.E. Church." I got to looking at that, and it meant African Methodist Episcopal Church. That's too much. Don't get in a church named after a nation. Get in one named after Christ.

The gates of Hell shall not prevail against IT. Not them— IT! That's not maybe, either— that's IT, and if you don't believe that's IT, I'll spell IT. Capital I— capital T.

Christ said, "Tell people not to be afraid of My Church— I'll fix it so even Hell can't bother it, so come on in." If you are in any other, He'll root you up. He told you He would, "Any plant my Father has not planted, I'll root

up." If you don't believe He'll root you up, just sit there till rootin' time, and then He'll show you.

Although Brother Keeble knew people believed "one was as good as another" and "we're all going to the same place anyhow," he found that when people changed their beliefs, sometimes they didn't change enough. He told about holding a meeting in Los Angeles, and, as a result, many members of the Methodist church were baptized into Christ. Their preacher was often at the meeting and saw what was taking place. The preacher went home and painted a new sign to hang over the church house door. It read "Methodist Church of Christ." Brother Keeble said, "There ain't no such thing, but he did it anyway."

Marshall Keeble always got a chuckle out of telling about a man who knew the Truth, but apparently didn't know that he knew the Truth. Once while in Wichita Falls, Texas, he wanted to worship with the brethren, but did not know where the Church met. Keeble asked a fellow, who said, "Go up the street four blocks and then turn two blocks." When brother Keeble arrived, he found a meeting house, and he walked up to the door. Inside, there was a man teaching a Bible class. He stopped teaching and came to the door. Brother Keeble asked him, "Is this the church of Christ?" The man said, "No, it ain't." He said, "See that one a block up the street? That ain't it, either, but turn left and just around the corner, that's it." When brother Keeble told this story, he would always add, "That man told the truth, but he didn't know it."

Often he would ask:

Why does the store owner put his sign over the door?
So you won't go in that other store. He wants your
business...Why does Jesus put His sign over the door

of His church? So you won't get in those other things...He wants your business.

The man brother Keeble spoke of knew the truth, told the truth, and yet didn't know that he knew the truth. But he did know which church was which. Brother Keeble told another story of a woman in Alabama who knew the same thing:

I was in Alabama in a meeting and was sitting on the front porch when a lady came down the street crying and shouting. I asked the lady where I was staying what was the matter with that woman. She told me that she was crying because they had let her out of her church. I went out to the sidewalk and started a conversation with the lady, and she told me the same thing. I said, "Lady, you go back down there and thank that preacher for turning you out, 'cause you weren't in nothing no way." Before I left that town, I baptized her into Christ.

Sometimes Brother Keeble likened the entering of a man into Christ's Church to the Israelites passing through the Red Sea. He said,

God told the Israelites, "Stand still." Why? "Until I make you a hole, then I'll tell you to march." Then He made the water turn back, it congealed— that means frozen. Then the people marched. They marched through on smooth, dry ground, and as they marched, they were air conditioned. Christians can do this. They can enter and as they go through, they can go through air conditioned on smooth, dry ground.

Once a person was in the Church, brother Keeble knew that the Church was valuable to a man's life. He set forth his parable like this:

"E" on a gas gauge means empty. Once I looked over and saw the tank was empty, and right down at the foot of the hill was a gas station. It was night, and there was a sign that said, "Open 24 hours a day." This station owner said he had white gas, ethel gas and regular gas. He recommended the ethel gas because it would take the knocks out of the car. That's what we ought to do in the church of Christ— stay open for business day and night, and we ought to use the "ethel gas" because it takes the knocks out— the knocks out of life.

While brother Keeble was fully aware that once in Christ—the Church, there would be many blessings, he also knew that those in the Church could cut off those blessings. He would often say, "I've been hanging around my brethren so long, I know them like a book." Out of that "book" he reasoned:

The Church loses Her power when She doesn't do like God wants Her to do.

A man on the highway who can't make up his mind is a dangerous thing. It's the same way with a man in the Church.

While sitting in a service station in Frankfort, Indiana, we saw a sign marked "Division Street." A preacher friend was with us, and he said, "I don't guess there's a city in the world that doesn't have a Division Street." Then he added, "Too often, it's the same in the Church." Brother Keeble responded, "They're not streets, though, they're avenues. There's a difference. The avenues are wider."

Brother Keeble disliked disturbances and divisions in the Church. He was often called to help calm “troubled waters.”

We sit around and fuss while our denominational friends take the world. We’ve got to quit fussing and quit this splitting the Church.

A man splits a church and runs off *from* some and runs off *with* some. The man thinks he is making friends...I don’t need that kind of a friend. I am afraid of him...if he runs off from others, he’ll run off from me.

Jesus said, “Except ye become as little children, you can’t enter the Kingdom of God.” The trouble with those of us in the Church is that everybody wants to be grown up. We don’t have a child-like disposition. Everybody wants to be big, so they end up going around splitting churches.

Throughout his life Marshall Keeble studied human nature, knew human nature, and tried to work within the framework of human nature as long as it was not contrary to the will of the Almighty. Knowing human nature and it’s relationship to the Church, he came to these conclusions:

Men are tearing up the Church today under the pretense, “I love the Church,” but it’s really because of jealousy and envy.

There’s too much jealousy in the Church— a jealous preacher— so that makes a jealous church. He gets all the people jealous.

Jealousy is gonna kill the church of Christ— no! We can’t kill it— Jesus said, “The gates of Hell shall not

prevail against it.” So, I’ll have to back up. But, we are crippling it by being jealous of one another.

The reason Daniel could go into the lion’s den was because he had the right spirit. I don’t know whether we’re envious, jealous or what’s wrong. I do know that the Church ought to be the best in the world, wherever you are.

The Scriptures taught brother Keeble many years ago that “the gates of Hell” could not hinder the Church, yet he knew men could. Whenever he preached to the Church, he was always encouraging the Church to righteous living. He knew any other kind of life would hinder the growth of the Church:

Some folks ask, “Why ain’t the Church growing now like it used to?” Well, I can tell you. It might be we’re blocking it. Some hypocrite might be laying in the road right now, right smack dab in the way, blocking the Church.

When you mess up, you’ve got to back up. You’ve got to back up and get started again. That’s repentance. You’ve gone too far. You’ve missed the turn, now back up— repent! Why, I wouldn’t even have a horse that wouldn’t back up.

Nothing you can do will separate you from God if you will come back. You just have to come back— turn around and come on back.

If you go to the blackboard and work a problem wrong, you’re gonna need an eraser. You must erase the wrong before you can do it right. This is the same as confession and prayer.

The church of Christ will take the world for Christ when we practice what we READ!

Everything in the Church needs encouragement. We encourage a little baby to walk toward us. If the Church would just encourage one another to the right kind of living, the world will move over and let the Church come through.

We're too dry in the Church. We need to cry some, and we need to rejoice.

Never was there a doubt in the mind of Marshall Keeble about the Church or how you get into the one Church. He said too much "too loudly" for one to think otherwise:

For me to go to Africa, I had to be "shot." I had to have several shots. Then, it was written on my passport. The government looked at it and then let me on the plane before we went up. Before you go up, you've got to get five shots. The first "shot"— hear; second "shot"— believe; third "shot"— repent; fourth "shot"— confess; fifth "shot"— be baptized. After that, you'll be permitted to go up.

Of course, brother Keeble knew these alone would not really "take you up." He knew we had to "take up with Christ" before Christ would ever take us up— that one would have to become more and more like Him. Keeble knew we had to play by the rules. He would say, "You can't score on a foul. You need a fair ball for a homerun. The church of Christ has been scoring on a fair ball for years."

Brother Keeble knew that members of the Church could accumulate "excess baggage." He encouraged everyone to cast it overboard.

When I went around the world, I had to have my suitcases checked to see if I had something wrong in them. If I did, the man would have thrown me out and thrown them away. It's the same way with God. He's going to check our suitcases, and if He finds anything wrong, He's going to throw us out.

One thing was certain— Marshall Keeble was always optimistic about the future. And he never ceased to believe the words of Christ, "The gates of Hell shall not prevail against It." During a campaign in Delphi, Indiana, brother Keeble said:

The Church looks bright to me. When young people like you are busy doing the things that you're doing, there's no danger of the Church sliding back. It's goin' forward.

I visited brother Keeble at his home after his illness in 1968. As we talked on January 19, he told me:

As I look back on the Church, it's no telling what things would be like now if we had always worked as we are working now. I see great things for the Church. The Church is in the greatest period of Her time. If we don't do something about it now, it's our own fault.

Marshall Keeble knew the Church was in the world to make it a better place and he believed the day would come when the Father would send the Son for His Bride. Here's how Keeble explained it:

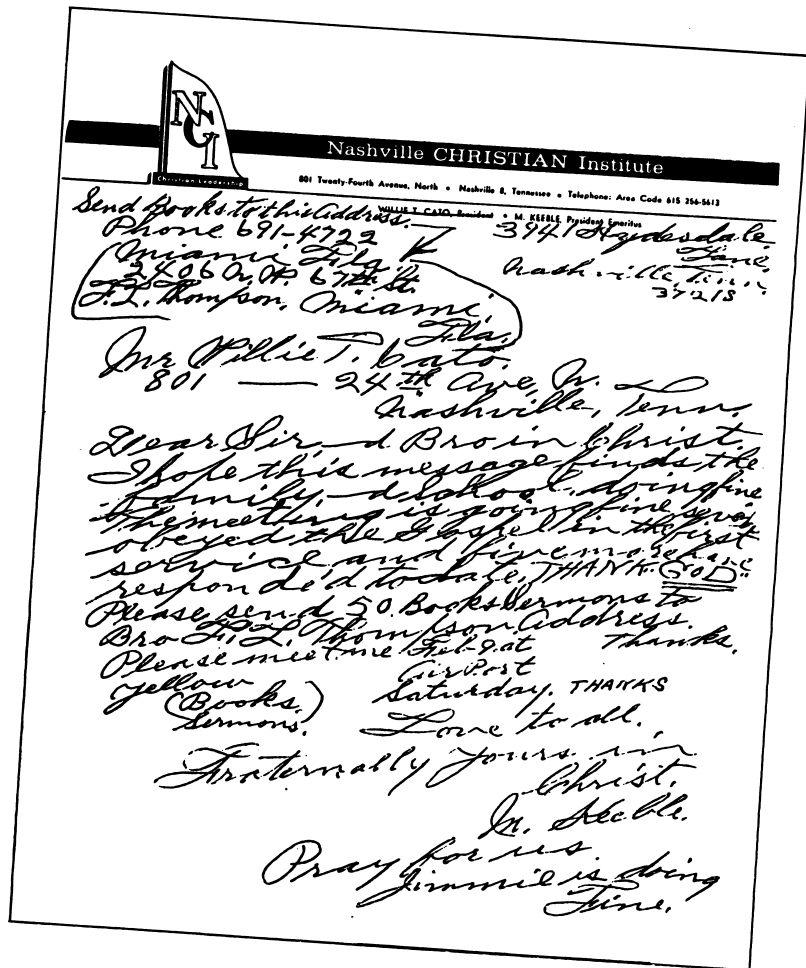
Jesus called Lazarus by his name. He didn't call anybody else. Jesus is coming back after His Church, and He'll call it by its name. Be sure you're in the one that has His name. If you're not, He'll call you later. He

could call all of them— I said, He could, I didn't say He would.

God will wake us up one day just to send us to a place that we worked for. If you worked for Hell, He'll send you there. If you worked for Heaven, He'll send you there.

I want to die in the Church that Jesus died for, not the one your momma died in. I want to die in the one bought by Jesus, not in the one started by man.

Yes, the Church Jesus bought— that's the Church Marshall Keeble loved. That's the Church in which Marshall Keeble lived. That's the Church Marshall Keeble served. And that's the Church in which Marshall Keeble died.



CHAPTER 6

BAPTISM—THE DOCTRINE HE BELIEVED, PREACHED AND PRACTICED

Marshall Keeble knew the Bible. He knew the Bible taught baptism—he knew it beyond a doubt. He also knew there were some people who didn't believe it, didn't know it, and so he spent a lifetime teaching about this all-important subject.

Yes, some said he talked about baptism too much. Others said, "That's just what you believe." Some felt it was simply "old-time" religion—too old for the modern generation. Even his own brethren sometimes wanted him to "get off the subject."

Do you think that hindered brother Keeble from preaching about baptism? Not one bit! He really preached it, "in season and out of season," and as he often said, "That's when they want it and when they don't want it." Knowing it was right, he did it. Keeble knew that if a man were going to be a Christian, he had to get into Christ, and that the only way was by being baptized into Christ. What wisdom—what proverbs:

Knowing the Scriptures from back to back don't make you a Christian.

Somewhere in this large auditorium there is a button that turns on the lights in here. One day, at Pentecost, about 3,000 went down into the water and touched that button and came out in the light of the world.

When a man goes down in baptism, he hits that "button." He goes down in darkness and he comes up in light.

Marshall Keeble knew there was power in water— real power. He knew water generated power for man's benefit— both physically and spiritually. There was power in his proverbs about the power:

Christ is the cornerstone of the Church. Every member is a stone. Every stone has been washed. Now, don't condemn brother Keeble for preaching too much water— the world is 3/4 water. You can't go to Heaven dry. Water is powerful. It holds the ocean steamer with thousands of pounds and thousands of people. So don't get excited about water. There's power in it.

God took water and baptized the world. There's power in water!

There's water in a car. There's power in that water. If you don't believe it, try going home without it in the radiator and you've got a burnt up car. Now, try to get a man to go home to Heaven without water and you've got a burnt up man. Try to get a church to go to Heaven without water, and you've got a burnt up church.

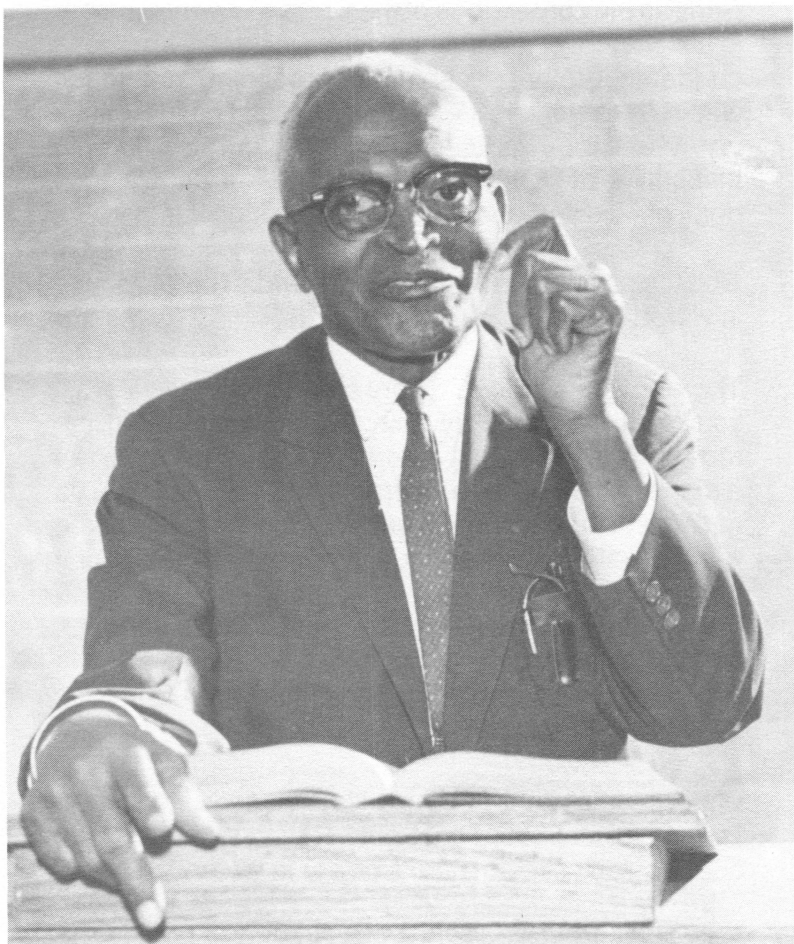
The woman just touched the hem of Christ's garment, and she was healed. What about the power that's in Him? Man is baptized into Christ, then man is in Him. That's powerful!

Water is important in man's life. God created water first, then He created man out of dust. Without water, dust wouldn't stick. There's power in water.

Whenever brother Keeble spoke publicly or privately about baptism bringing salvation to man, usually someone disagreed. Their disagreement was usually set at naught by his wisdom:

His Hand and Heart

Jesus made a man out of mud and the man walked. I used to make men out of mud— mine wouldn't walk. God did something man couldn't do. Men trying to save themselves can't do it no more than my mud men could walk. But God can do what man can't do. **SAVE.**



Marshall Keeble wisely expressed his understanding of God's word.

The Egyptians were destroyed with water. So is our enemy— sin— destroyed with water. The world has water, man has got water— in fact, most of the stuff man is made of is water. God knew water was important.

Some say you're saved before baptism. Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Now, you can't say that you're saved before baptism— besides, you're calling God a liar. You can't go to Heaven calling God a liar. You can call me a liar, but not Him.

A man is not saved and then baptized. A woman doesn't wash clothes because they're already clean— I've seen a lot of smart women, but not that smart. She washes the clothes because they're dirty. Man is baptized because he's dirty and needs to be cleaned.

Philip told the Ethiopian, "See, here is water." He didn't say, now here's the Holy Ghost. He didn't tell him to come and profess religion, but rather come and confess— confess Christ— Christ as God's Son.

Lazarus was dead. He'd been dead long enough to be stinking. That's pretty filthy. The Lord told Lazarus, "Come forth." When one comes to Christ, he's a dead man. If a dead man can come forth, surely a man dead in sin can come forth and become a living man.

Brother Keeble expressed his understanding of that new relationship:

God made everything, but man is the only thing he had to make over. Man became a miserable mess. God

had to make him over— had to make him a new creature. He made him a new creature in Christ.

You bury one (the old) man and bring up a new one— another man. Not the same old man; I said, “Another man.” I’ve done it thousands of times, and I was conscious of it.

When Jonah hit the water, something swallowed him. If you’ll hit the water, something will swallow you. What’s that something? Christ! You’re baptized into Christ— swallowed up by Christ!

Christ said, “I am the door.” There are some stores in this town that used to pay a doorman to stand outside and open the door for the people. Now, you don’t have to have a doorman, you just get close to the door and it opens up— opens itself, and you go right in. Now, go down into baptism, just get close to the door (Christ) and you’ll go right in, and no one can block the door either.

David’s stone killed Goliath. David had five stones. They were smooth stones. How had they become smooth? They’d been washed with water and had all the rough edges knocked off. Do you know that we’re called “lively stones”? Cause we’ve been washed, and the rough edges have been knocked off.

One day while brother Keeble and I were driving down the highway, we passed a place where wrecked automobiles littered the hillsides. That reminded brother Keeble of a parallel in Galveston, Texas. He and a doctor friend were driving along and passed a place that seemed to have the largest scrap iron piles he had ever seen. Brother Keeble said, “I just thought.

That man must have thousands of dollars out there, but it ain't worth a dime unless it is made over. It's all rusty, bent and broken. It's not any good at all like it is, but it can be taken and made over and sent back as a shiny new Cadillac." Then brother Keeble gave the spiritual application:

Christ had to make Saul over. Had to knock him down before He could do it, though. Just like that man will have to knock down that scrap iron. Man is the most ungrateful thing and the most stubborn thing on earth. He needs to be made over, and when he's made over, then he's alright. Melt the iron, put it in the cubicle, pour it into the form and it's made over. Put man in baptism, that's the form, bring him out of the water, and he's made over, a brand new, shiny man.

Regardless of how plainly brother Keeble taught on the subject of baptism, or how much he showed from the Bible the truthfulness and the necessity of baptism, there was always someone who didn't seem to understand. When this occurred, he sharpened the "sword of the Spirit":

Some say they can't see anything in the water. Well, you couldn't see anything when you were born, either. If so, you were contrary to nature.

Christ is down there in the water, but somebody says, "I don't see Him." He didn't tell you to see Him, He said believe it. There's power in gasoline, but you can't see it, but you believe it enough to put it in your automobile.

When I was trying to convince this man to be baptized, the man said, "I don't see it." Well, I'll read it to you again— I did, and then I said, "Now, don't you see it?" Then man said, "No." I looked over at him and he had

his eyes shut. Just close your eyes to the Truth, and you'll never see it.

Sometimes we don't see the truth of baptism, so we pick out something else to do. We think a sinner can pray through. A sinner praying is like asking his Heavenly Father for something before being born. Did you ever see a boy ask his Daddy for anything before he was born? Why, if he did, he would scare his Daddy so bad he couldn't catch his Daddy in order to get it.

I was in a tent meeting in Wartrace, Tennessee. I went to see a lady who said baptism doesn't save. She said it was no good— that you didn't have to be baptized. When I got there, I said, "Let me see your Bible." She got it and said, "Okay, go ahead, but it ain't in there." I looked and couldn't find it. She said, "See, I told you you couldn't find it, I cut it out."

We don't see Jesus, but we touch Him and get into Christ. We don't see that thing that opens the doors automatically, but we just touch that thing and it opens, and we go right in. That's the way we get into Christ, and if we die in Christ, we'll automatically get to go in at the last day.

Brother Keeble was always amazed at the number of ways that "religious folks" tried to get around baptism. He would often say, "Men have already thought of a bunch of ways, and I guess before I die, they'll think of a bunch more, but not a single one of them will work." His proverbs were often shocking, but simple:

The devil wants all his sinners dry, he knows they'll burn better.

If you were “saved” at the mourner’s bench, you were “saved” dry. Of course, Satan wants you dry, ‘cause he knows you will burn better.

If one can be saved dry, that puts God in the dry cleaning business. Everybody who has been saved has had to go through the water.

Don’t put a man down at the mourner’s bench. If you’re going to put him down, put him down in the water (baptism)— sho nuf put him down. There wasn’t no mourner’s bench on Pentecost. If so, it must have been a mighty big one to hold 3,000 people.

Baptism is a spiritual bath. The soap that you use is blood— the blood of Christ. If your wife fixes your bath water and tells you that your water is ready, and you go in and she comes in and finds you kneeled down beside it, she thinks you’re crazy. You look funny to her. Well, you look that funny down at a mourner’s bench praying.

You can’t “pray through”— you can’t get “saved” that way. You have to get up. One person in the Bible was told to get up— he’d been there for three days and nights without eating or drinking. He was told to get up and wash. Why wash? He was dirty. Clean up, then talk to God!

Someone said, “What do you mean Billy Graham don’t go deep enough?” I mean this, Billy Graham don’t baptize— that’s deep enough!

Often Brother Keeble was told that sprinkling or pouring was as good as baptism— a burial. One day while Keeble was preaching, a man in the audience stood up and shouted, “Why,

you don't have to be buried in no water to be saved!" The man was answered with the wit and wisdom of Keeble:

Some churches are like an ESSO station. You go in, get your windshield shined, they sweep out the floor-board, then they check your oil. The man tells you that you need a quart, and then he says, "We got three kinds—light, medium or heavy." Now, a lot of churches are like that—they take you in, shine you up, give you a little religion, and when you ask to be baptized, they've got three kinds—light, medium and heavy—that's sprinkle, pour or immerse. They tell you that you can take your choice. Now, that ain't in the Bible!

On other occasions, that same wit prevailed:

You never heard of a woman sprinkling water on clothes to get the dirt out. You never heard of a woman pouring water on clothes to clean them. She always puts them in the water. My Mother would make me build a fire around the old wash kettle, then put the water and soap in it, then she'd come out and tell me to put the clothes in. If they didn't go under the water, she'd give me a stick to chunk 'em in. It's the same way with man, he's not clean unless he goes under—all the way under. If I see his nose sticking out, I "chunk him in."

It was not an uncommon thing for people to come to brother Keeble during one of his meetings, and they would explain to him that they had been baptized. They would tell him they were a member of such-and-such a group and that they had been baptized and thus they didn't feel they needed to be baptized again. Knowing that this often happened and might

happen again, brother Keeble would set forth his understanding from the pulpit:

Christ told the blind man to go wash in the pool of Siloam. He could have washed there before, but he'd never washed there at the command of the Savior. If you've been baptized in a Methodist or Baptist church or any other church, it's not by the command of the Savior. Everybody needs to be baptized by the command of Christ.

Some of the apostles had been fishing. They hadn't caught anything, and they decided that they were going to quit. When Jesus came along, they were washing their nets, and he commanded them to go back out there and let down their nets. One of them said, "We've been out there." Sort of like a smart alec, you've always got somebody like this. They jump up and say, "I've been baptized." But you weren't baptized at the command of Jesus. Now, get back out there. They did, and they caught fish. Then they were promoted. They got a better job— they were made fishers of men. Why? They listened to Jesus' command to "get back out there." And they did.

While brother Keeble knew many desired that he not speak out so plainly and strongly on baptism, he had a reason for it. He had to. It was in the Bible, and he knew the Bible was right. He never failed to tell people why he did:

Why does Keeble preach so much about water? I'll tell you [holding up the Bible]. This Book is full of water. You can wring it the least bit, and the water will just fly.

On the day Christ was crucified, He was pierced in the side. Out came blood and water— they came out

together. When you hit the water, you touch that blood at the same time. They're still together.

The Gospel is made up of five "pills" that will cure anything: first pill— "hear"; second pill— "believe"; third pill— "confess"; fourth pill— "repent"; fifth pill— "baptism." Take 'em in water, and they'll cure any sin.

You have to do four of the five things all of your life: 1) continue to hear; 2) continue to believe; 3) continue to repent; 4) continue to confess him. The "water job" is the only one you don't have to keep on doing, because you're only born once— born of the water and of the Spirit.

Brother Keeble was preaching the Gospel in a meeting in Birmingham, Alabama. A woman had been hearing him each evening. She wanted to be baptized. As her husband left for work, he said to her, "If you're baptized by that man and slander me as a deacon in the Baptist Church, you won't eat any more of my bread." She said, "Smith, I want you to know that more men than you have got bread— God has baked more bread than you ever had." She was baptized, and she returned home to eat bread at her husband's table. She knew the necessity of being baptized and of forsaking all to follow Jesus. That's what brother Keeble did— he forsook all in order to follow Jesus in all that he preached and practiced.

CHAPTER 7

PREACHING TO PREACHERS— HE KNEW THEIR NEEDS

Marshall Keeble loved the Truth. He preached the Truth. He lived the Truth. And he trained others to know the Truth. Brother Keeble's life was given to exhorting people to live the Truth. Many times he would say, "Learn the Gospel, preach the Gospel, live the Gospel, and somebody will obey the Gospel."

One evening, brother Keeble and I visited some brethren in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. One of brother Keeble's "boys" (a young preacher in training) went along with us. Brother Keeble introduced the young man to the audience and publicly remarked to him, "You get up here to lift Christ up, to represent the Church He bought, and to preach the Gospel that will save anybody's soul."

Brother Keeble made two trips to Nigeria. Speaking to the preacher students at the Nigerian Bible College in Ukpom, he strongly encouraged them to preach the Gospel. Keeble charged them, "I want you fellas to preach the Gospel to everybody in every village in this area. Preach the Gospel all over Nigeria. I want you to preach It all over Africa. I want you to preach the Gospel to the Queen of England." Brother Keeble knew every man needed to hear the Gospel. He knew God wanted somebody to scatter the Seed of the Kingdom. He wanted all men whom he taught to be an evangelist.

On one occasion, he said,

I'd love to see an evangelist today— a real one, not just one that thinks he is, one who goes to the house, sits down and crosses his legs, takes life easy and then on Sunday reads a few verses from the Bible. That's not

an evangelist. I don't know what that is, but that's not an evangelist. I'd like to see some real evangelists.

Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas always invited brother Keeble to speak at their annual lectureship in November. On one occasion while speaking to a group of preachers, he said, "The brethren of Terrell have asked me to say something at the lectureship to the preachers." He spoke on the work of the Church, the love needed in the Church, the jealousy that often existed in the Church, etc. Then he said, "When brother Stewart asked me to come, I hadn't decided what to say, so I decided to say what I am saying, because I know you need it." Brother Keeble was aware that the congregation "catches" all of the preacher's diseases and he knew there were jealous preachers. He said, "You can tell a jealous preacher as soon as you meet him. I can shake hands with him and tell whether he is jealous or not. If you want to know what's in a book, look in the index. A man's countenance is his index—you want to know what's in his heart? Well, look at his index."

Marshall Keeble was a man of great wisdom. He shared that wisdom. He knew the kind of life it took to successfully preach the Word. Here are a few of his proverbs on the subject of "living what you preach":

Watch your Bible—live what you preach, and people will watch you.

You've got a book, and you can take that book and conquer the world, but you can't do it with it under your arm. You've got to have it in your heart.

One may not know what's written, but he knows what's practiced, so live your religion.

Unless you're willing to practice Christianity, don't preach.

What we need is more preaching the Gospel and pure living behind it, and the Church will grow.

Want to commit spiritual suicide? Then take up with women—you'll die in your tracks, with the Bible under your arm. Start messing with women and you get weak in the pulpit. You can't fight what you want to fight, you're dying.

Brother Keeble not only knew the type of life that it took to successfully proclaim the Good News, but he knew how It must be preached. He would often say:

I never preach for compliments, I always preach for salvation.

If you would preach a little straighter, we wouldn't be so crooked.

Don't preach to make friends or so we will be loved—don't do that. Preach so God will be loved and souls will be saved.

Don't shoot a gun and then run around and head off the bullet. Let it alone, let it hit its mark.

When I was a boy, I played baseball—always loved to play—always loved to knock a home run and always liked to go in standing up. Never did like to slide in. Too many preachers are sliding around with the Gospel, and if they don't watch, the Lord is going to call them out, too.

Don't sugar-coat the Truth, just season it with salt.

Wrap up the words you say in love. If you went to the grocery store and ordered a steak, you would not want the clerk to hand it to you dangling over the counter. You'd want it wrapped up. People need the Truth, but they need It wrapped up— wrapped in love.

The more brother Keeble preached, and preached to preachers about preaching, the greater seemed to be the flow of his proverbs:

As a speaker, learn to first freeze 'em and then thaw 'em...you can't leave them frozen, they've got to be thawed.

To operate on a man for sin, you can't put him to sleep, you've got to get his attention.

You can hit a nail too many times, then you bust the plank. So, don't keep on hitting it; hit it, then ease off.

Always "skin" a man so he won't holler.

You can't lead anybody with vinegar, but you can sure lead them with molasses.

Put vaseline on first before you put the liniment on, then it won't blister.

A prize fighter plays around with his partner, sort of sparring with him, then he waits for the lick he wants to make, then he sends him to the shower. It's the same in preaching. Prepare the audience for the lick you want to make. That'll send them to the water— baptism.

Keeble's preaching was always bold and his heart caused him to be always kind. But when it came to preaching the Gospel, Brother Keeble wanted his hearers to understand. His heart prompted him to speak the following:

You have to speak plain to this generation—it used to be that a hint would do, but not now. You've got to tell them what you mean.

Some close up so tight on the preacher that he is afraid to call names. Why, you won't catch anybody like that—why, you wouldn't have gotten your wife if you hadn't called her name.

A good farmer never quits harrowing his ground. We must be corrected when we make mistakes. We need to be smoothed out, so that the Seed in our hearts will grow.

Don't get mad when there's a due notice in your mailbox. The postman is just delivering the mail addressed to you. The Gospel of Christ is a package of good news—a package for YOU, and the preacher is under orders to put it into YOUR "mailbox"—your heart, in the heart of every creature.

Brother Keeble was not ashamed to let the audience know that a certain atmosphere should prevail when good news—the Gospel—is revealed. I am not sure everyone in his audiences agreed, but he would often "entertain" them with the following bit of wisdom:

When you are on ice, you put the preacher on ice. If I could get you "hot" out there, I'd catch every sinner in here.

When we play basketball at school, we have a pep squad. When the boys are lagging behind, the pep squad moves in, peps it up and then they make the baskets. I'm about persuaded to ask the elders to put a pep squad in the Church. We put the preacher on ice, and then expect him to perspire while he's "filling your baskets."

It's alright with me if you want to say "amen," that lets me know that you believe what I'm saying, and that what I'm saying is right. It also lets the fella sitting next to you know that you love the Truth. Go to a ballgame and everybody is yelling and clapping their hands except you, and the fella next to you looks at you and says, "Don't you like ballgames?" We ought to at least let our neighbors know that we like the Gospel.

Marshall Keeble went around the world preaching the Gospel. He was constantly on the move going from place to place preaching the plan of salvation. He often told others:

The Gospel will fix you so that you can carry it to people of all nations. That's why Jesus said you can carry the Gospel to every nation.

As long as brother Keeble lived, he wanted to preach the Word, and God granted that request. He spoke on a Wednesday evening in Ohio, returned to Nashville on Thursday and died on Saturday. Keeble never wanted to quit. He made reference to the disciples:

The disciples were fishing and didn't catch anything. Disgusted, they said, "Let's wash our nets, we're through." Jesus came along and said, "You're not through." You're never through when fishing for men. We can never hang up our nets. Let the Lord do that.

A younger preacher (Keeble was 84) told him, “The brethren won’t call on me any more, they have done put me on the shelf.” Keeble told him, “They didn’t put you on the shelf, you just got up there. I don’t intend to get on the shelf for another 15 years.”

It disappointed brother Keeble that meetings among the brethren which formerly lasted for 30 days or more had now been reduced to a week or a few days. He often made reference to his disappointment and would repeatedly say:

We need thirty days and nights right here on this spot of ground. We chop our meetings off too short. We cheat the world out of a lot. We also cheat God out of a lot.

Often brother Keeble described his life’s work as starting fires— preaching the Gospel, “getting ’em all stirred up— on fire, red hot, then leaving the fire for the brethren to fan.”

One day, while brother Keeble and I were riding down the highway, he observed a religious building. There was a sign in the yard giving information about the group. The preacher’s name was listed as “Reverend Mrs. So-and-So.” I told brother Keeble they had a woman preacher. He said, “Jesus don’t want a woman preaching the Gospel. He wants her to stay home and raise preachers.”

Brother Keeble knew that when he preached the Gospel he was right. He would often say:

I KNOW this is right (holding up the Bible). The Bible is right! I ain’t made no mistake about it. If I have made a mistake at all, it has been in language and not in doctrine.

Perhaps, no man knew better than brother Keeble that God would bless his efforts if he preached the Gospel. He would often tell me:

Serve God— all you have to do is SERVE Him. If you do, you can see His hand!

I'm 87 years old. When brother Cato made arrangements for this trip, I thought it might be too much for me— each day I get stronger and stronger. The Lord supplies the strength when you work for Him.

Marshall Keeble knew that if somebody loved the Gospel, preached the Gospel and lived the Gospel, that somebody would obey the Gospel.



*A. L. Jimmie will be on the
radio tomorrow
at the 12:30 P.M.*

Nashville CHRISTIAN Institute

801 Twenty-Fourth Avenue, North • Nashville 8, Tennessee • Telephone: Area Code 615 266-5613

Willie T. Cato, President • M. Keeble, President Emeritus
here, 414 - Glendale 379-0637 / 2903 N. 12th St.
May 9, Milwaukee, Wis.

Mr Willie Cato.

Dear Sir, - Brother in Christ.
I hope this message will find you and
family well, and enjoying life in
I am here in a fine meeting, and
Jimmie is really doing his part.
I wish you could all join him.
You would be surprised to see
us with you. S.M.E. & have respect
going to the golf ball. And there are
many feeling fine than I did. I
we hope you and family are en-
joying the blessing of God.
One of the white churches have invit-
us to speak at their home again
next week day, they say that is
ing and never been filled, they
believe we can fill it, and they
agreed to remain open, and
let Christ in. I let them
draw them up. Amen, may
God give happiness, and thank
God for your coming over to
preach Christ to these people.
I can't say. He is over in the
world.
It seems like people worry where are
wanting you to be lifted up and
we are forcing that in Christ
and we are in asking all of you
to pray for us, and I am sure
us to the whole school, and I will
pray for us. Sincerely yours in Christ
M. Keeble.

CHAPTER 8

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION— THE CAUSE HE SERVED

Nobody, simply nobody, knew the value of Christian education more than Marshall Keeble. He knew the end result of it. He loved it and expressed that love in a superlative degree by giving his life to it. Never did he weary of speaking in behalf of Christian education. Every throb of his heart, every thrust of his hand, every sound of his voice advanced the cause of Christian education—not just in Nashville, but throughout the world.

Marshall Keeble knew that Christ was a Teacher, and he knew that this Teacher selected twelve men, and that He lived with them and prepared them for the task of sharing the Good News with the world. Keeble emulated the Master Teacher. He selected “boys,” lived with them, trained them and sent them into the world with the Good News of Christ. Today, these “boys” are serving well. The Kingdom has spread because their lives were touched by the life of a good and great teacher.

Many things were said by Marshall Keeble about Christian education. Plainly he saw the Master Teacher and the work He was doing. Listen to his descriptive terms:

Jesus started the first school with twelve students. They went to school for three years. The diplomas were sent down on Pentecost, to guide them into all Truth. Jesus really said to them, “If you have forgotten anything you learned in school, this will remind you.” [He would always add, “Don’t look for this in the New Testament, it ain’t there.”]

Preachers are prepared by Christian education, and you ask how. Well, I'll tell you. Christian education prepares the greatest preachers for the greatest thing to serve in the greatest institution, and that while sitting at the feet of the greatest men.

The Christian schools are preparing young men and women to catch men for Christ. The first men sent out were schooled by Christ for three years, then he turned them out— he graduated them, and they caught 3,000 in the Gospel net the very first time.

When Marshall Keeble spoke in behalf of Christian education, whether to one or to 1,000, he would say:

Without Christian education, we would not have the churches we've got. The reason that there are so many churches in Nashville is because of Christian education. Wherever the Truth is taught, you've got Christians, whether the Truth is taught in the Church or in a Christian school.

Ninety-five percent of our preachers come from Christian schools. Twice as many as those who go in planning to preach actually come out of the colleges as preachers.

The Church calls men who have an education. The elders don't want somebody bustin' verbs and splittin' adjectives. There's a great need for Christian education.

Eight out of ten Christians enrolled in state colleges become unfaithful before graduation. That's not so in our Christian schools.

The increase in crime is up four times as fast as the population. When Paul was knocked down by God, he was lying there on the ground looking up and said, "Who was that that hit me like that?" He had never had a lick like that before. God is going to have to place a lick like that on the whole world—America and Russia, and all the rest. He'll have to turn these boys loose with Gospel bombs, not nuclear bombs.

Brother Keeble would preach in meetings, and the brethren would pay him. He always gave the money to the school for operational funds. Because the school prepared young people for Christian living and service, brethren often shared in the work. Some of the brethren who knew this would ask, "Do you take money out of the church treasury to operate the school?" Brother Keeble always responded, "No! That would be stealing. Naw, I don't take money out of the treasury—the brethren give it to me." He often said of those men, "I'd rather do something my way than to do nothing their way."

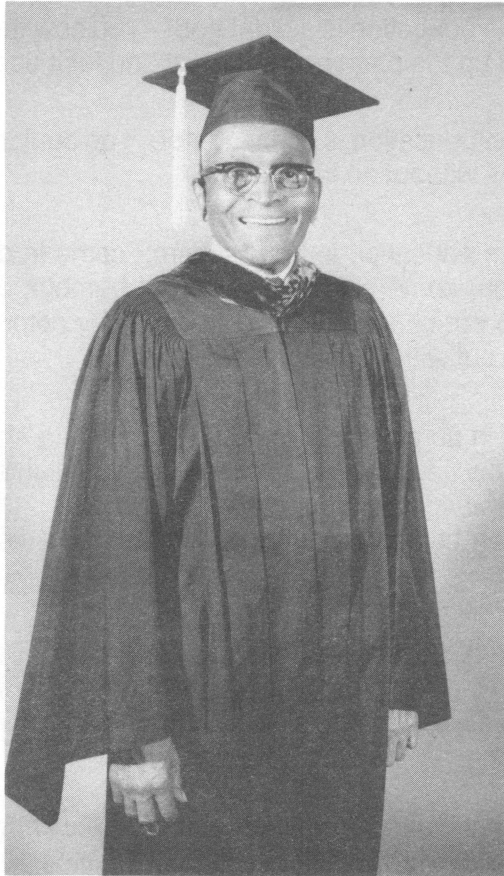
Talking about the real value of Christian education, brother Keeble would often say, "An educated man is one who has had his brains expanded." Yet, he knew that the complete education of a young person was more than that. Here's how he proved it:

If you want your child to be a success, put Christ in him—Christian education will do just this.

Uncle Sam takes your boy out from behind the mule, keeps him three or four years, and he comes home and you don't even know him. He ain't never stood that straight before, but Uncle Sam has done took all the knots out of his back. Christian education takes the knots out, too.

Education without salvation is damnation to any generation.

You need to educate a man all the way around— if you don't, you sure got a "fool" on your hands.



An honorary degree of Doctor of Humanities was bestowed upon Keeble by Harding College.

Perhaps few men could speak in “parables” as brother Keeble. It seemed that he always had a new parable concerning Christian education:

Christian education is the ham hock that flavors— just the same as it does when it’s in the turnip greens.

Christian education is a plant bed— you sow the seed, you pull up the plant and set it out and let it bear fruit.

Christian education is an incubator. You couldn’t have chickens without an incubator.

Christian education is like baptism: come in dirty, go out clean; come in haughty, go out humble; come in ugly, go out beautiful; come in with filthy communication, go out with beautiful conversation.

We live in an electrical world. If you have a shortage, you’ll blow a fuse. If you blow a fuse, your lights will go out. If the lights go out, you’re in the dark. Christian education takes you out of darkness and puts you in the light.

You can bend a sapling any way you want. But try to bend an old oak tree. Stand up there and try to bend it— you’ll wear yourself out. So train a child when he is young.

Like any valuable product, brother Keeble knew there was a financial cost to Christian education. He gave himself. Not only did he give of himself, but he gave his possessions in order to train young people. He asked others to give their possessions and they did. Brother Keeble would say:

It takes three G's to run a Christian school: grace— Keeble has it; grit— I got it; greenback— you've got IT and I've come for it!

I need friends, one like Christ and a whole lot like you— I'd rather have friends than money, provided my friends have money.

You could give every child in the family a college education in one of our Christian schools if we could just take the cigarette money, and if mama would quit dippin' snuff.

Never waste money. Put it where you can make something out of him (the child)— not out of it (money).

Brother Keeble and I joined brother George Benson in Oklahoma working in behalf of funds for Oklahoma Christian College when that school was young. We would fly from appointment to appointment in a small single-engine plane. One day while we were waiting for the plane to be made ready for the flight, brother Benson was assuring brother Keeble that all was well. Brother Benson explained a few things about the plane to brother Keeble and then told him about the pilot. Brother Benson said, "Brother Keeble, this pilot is a very safe pilot. He flew a fighter during the war." Brother Keeble quickly responded, "Yes, and he's flying a fighter today." Yes, brother Marshall Keeble was a fighter, and the heart of the fighter was Christ and Christian education. Never let it be said that Marshall Keeble didn't win the battle.

Mr. Millie T. Gato,
301 - 24th Ave., N.,
Nashville, Texas.

Dear Sir, and Bro in Christ.
It is with great joy and affec-
tion I write you because
I know that you are praying
for us, and that you, & family
are well.
I hope every thing goes well at
the school.
I am very thankful for your
arranging with Bro Holston
to look me, he was so nice, &
kind, and I love him.
Our meeting is going fine
some nights we have over 30
churches represented, they chuc-
-ed every night, it is so en-
-couraging and inspiring.
Marshall is making a great im-
pression on all who hear him.
He will arrive Nov. 19, if that is all.

Pray for us,
Love to the School,
Fraternally yours in
Christ.

I am feeling fine
Pressing On.
Ans. Kiehl,

1801 Callington
Fort Worth, TEXAS
DRIVE

Phone. G2-1-

30K1

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CHAPTER 9

CHAPEL TALKS— THE YOUNG WHOM HE LOVED

Chapel time at Nashville Christian Institute was always one of the highlights of the day for both faculty and students. The hour of 10:00 brought us together to sing, pray, read the Scriptures and to be edified.

The young men usually directed and participated in the chapel activities. This was their “laboratory”— their training ground. This gave them an opportunity to learn to “march for the Master.” Whenever brother Keeble was in town, he was always in chapel. He never missed. And he was thrilled to see “his boys” in training. After one of the young men had spoken, brother Keeble followed with his words of encouragement. Sometimes brother Keeble was chosen to be the speaker of the hour and this gave him an opportunity to share at greater length his words of wisdom.

Through the years, brother Keeble laid many proverbs on the hearts of young men and women. He knew the era in which they were living, who they were, and the social changes through which they were passing. Every proverb was suitable for “the hour.”

Above all things, brother Keeble wanted “his children” to live the right kind of life. He shared such tidbits of wisdom as:

Nobody has a copyright on doing right.

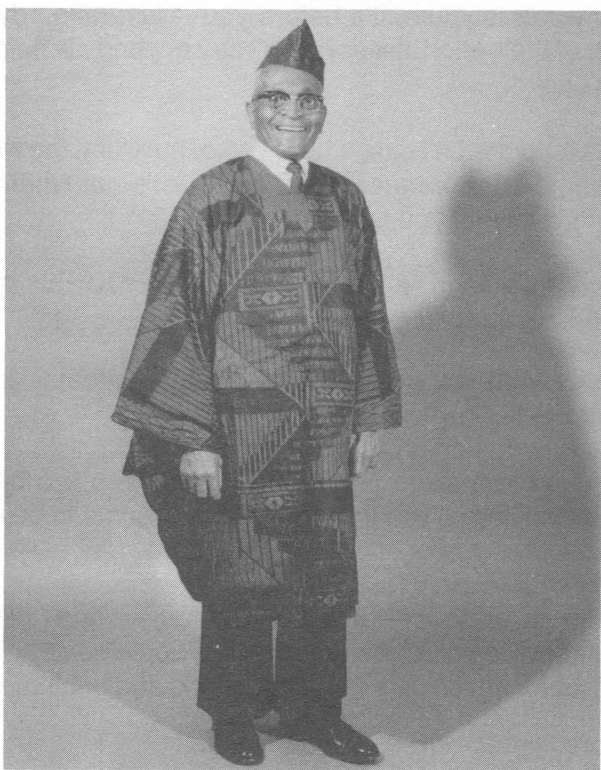
You can't hide a Christian. He is the light of the world. I once saw a blind man carrying a lantern. I wondered why. I figured out that he was carrying it so people would not run over him. Christians are lights and, if

Chapel Talks— The Young Whom He Loved

Christians will live right, nobody is going to run over them.

Man is recognized because of his conduct, not because of his color. When you live right, all men will honor, respect and even serve you, but you gotta live right.

Marshall Keeble wanted every student to do more mission work.



While visiting in Nigeria, Keeble was issued an honorary chieftain certificate, giving him tribal privileges.

You're all too satisfied, we've got to do something to spread the Kingdom. We're too satisfied. We're loaded with prejudice. You can't succeed until you get rid of it. We can take the world for Christ— we've got the message, and the fields are ripe unto harvest.

Brother Keeble was certainly in touch with reality— the reality of his world. He knew there was a place in the world for everybody. He would say:

The world is yours, it's before you— just take advantage of the opportunities. Don't say anybody is holding you back.

The world doesn't care where you came from, the world wants to know where you're going. It's not what you begin, it's what you finish.

Knowing who his students were, brother Keeble spoke so as to let them know they could make it in the world:

Forget what you go against and make something out of yourself.

Because you are a Negro, don't think you are hated and despised. If you think that, you will come to believe it.

If I go up or down— it will be my fault— don't blame somebody else, it'll be your fault. People have spit on me, but I never quit climbing. If I quit climbing, I go down.

Don't blame the hydrant because the water won't run. The hydrant just needs turning...you can cut off anything. Blessings don't come if you cut them off.

The more you do to me to keep me down, the harder I work.

Don't go through life with your head hung down, you won't see nothin', nor do nothin'.

God is going to make you do something if you serve Him. He made Moses stretch out his rod. The Israelites couldn't swim the Red Sea, it was too wide. They couldn't wade it because it was too deep, but Moses could hold out his rod.

Brother Keeble knew the value of work and he knew God's servants must work. He especially wanted those he trained to grow up and become workers, regardless of the type work they might choose to do. The following proverbs of Keeble pointed in that direction:

Can't anybody hold you down if you work—if you work, you'll pass right on by your enemies.

Whatever you're in, do your best. You never know what you can do when you do your best.

Any dead fish can float down stream. It takes a live fish to go up stream. Come alive!

When you work, you'll make friends, but you need to be better to your enemies than you are to your friends—that way, you'll make friends out of them. Work hard at it, and you'll have more friends.

Your friends are your spare tire. You don't ride on your spare, you save that for an emergency. Some men can't ride without wanting to put on their spare and ride on it. If you work, you won't have to do that.

Disobedience was always condemned by brother Keeble; obedience was always commended. Brother Keeble often condemned and commended as he stood before his “boys and girls.” To encourage obedience, he imparted words of wisdom:

Obedience is the best thing in the world— no boy or girl can be anything unless they respect those who are over them.

If you boys grow up and preach for forty years, you will still need teaching.

Never get to the stage where you don't take correction— you will always need it.

When a man won't listen to his friends or nobody else, he's got to fall.

Don't turn and bite the hand that helps to make you what you are. It ain't right.

We're living epistles. We're writing letters, and God's filing them, and when we die, God will pull out the letters. We'll forget that we even wrote this one, but it's yours— right out of your file.

If you will listen to God and have God on your side, nobody can harm you— knives, bullets, big men or lions, or nothin'— nothin' can harm you!

Knowing the world had its allurements and enticements, brother Keeble set forth proverbs to deter the young:

When you are in a place where you can't recognize God, that's when you're in the wrong thing.

The yellow and white of an egg won't mix unless the egg is cracked. That makes the egg a bad egg. It's the same with a man and the world. A good man won't mix with the world, but a bad man will. Come on, don't be a bad egg.

You can't stay up with the owls all night and fly with the eagles all day.

Lazarus *stinketh*— that's a strong word. We turn our nose up at it. But we're stinking worse than Lazarus was when we shoot craps, lie, steal— we stink in the nostrils of Jesus. He said, "I am the resurrection and the life, that is who I am— I'll raise him so he won't stink." He can raise us up and keep us from stinking.

The decade of the 1960's brought men of different races into difficult circumstances. Much of brother Keeble's admonition to the students during chapel hour encouraged them during these difficult times. He wanted them to know that there was a place for them, and that each individual was important. In telling the following, Keeble wanted them to know there were great things which they could accomplish:

As you go through life, you've got to adjust your gears. I have to adjust my gears so that I can get along with people. I don't care where I go, I have to adjust. You'll have to adjust your gears when you get a job, when you move into a new community or whatever you do. Every person has a different personality, every preacher and every congregation, so you'll just have to adjust. You can do it!

You can give a little bit of Heaven as you go through life and, especially, a little bit of Heaven among the brethren.

Religion is not "get-able." It's "do-able," you have to live it.

At the worst, things are not so bad. I have been around the world, and I had rather be a Negro in America than anywhere else in the world.

The demands Marshall Keeble made on his students for godly living were not in word only, but also in deed. He lived it. His deeds were powerful lessons, powerfully presented. Whether in the quiet of his office or the noise of the gymnasium, he humbly gave God the credit for all that was accomplished in the lives of "these children."

Today, brother Keeble's "boys and girls" are in that world of which he frequently spoke. Many proverbs have gone with them. Never a boy or a girl attended Nashville Christian Institute whom brother Keeble didn't love or help. After he had helped them, he wanted them to go out into the world and help others. And they are doing it, too!

CHAPTER 10

DAILY LIFE— THE WAY HE LIVED IT

During the decade of the 1960's, the negative aspects of race relations were magnified. Relationships between the races were not what they should have been—definitely not what God wanted them to be. This decade brought forth drastic changes.

The decade of the 1960's was restless. This restlessness was reflected in the lives of Christians. Brother Keeble would often say, "I've been in tight places before and have always gotten out." He wanted everyone to be able to emerge from "tight places," so he went among the brethren sharing wise sayings.

I recall many of them as if it were only yesterday, for I too, passed that way. However, I made the journey with one of God's great "generals" who was a good leader. I was blessed. Here are a few of those proverbs he shared with the brethren:

You don't know how much good you could do, if you would just go out and get down to quietly living the Christian life.

You don't have to be rich to be a blessing to your fellow man anytime.

You can live so you can be wanted, or you can live so you'll never be wanted.

Some guys have got plenty of dynamite, but they've got a short fuse. You know what that man does? He blows himself up.

Not all men could enter every door of society. Many were left on the outside. This happened often to brother Keeble.

However, he was able to enter many doors through which others were unable to pass. What he really wanted was for all men to enjoy every right and every privilege that other men did. Keeble shared this wisdom, which he hoped would help:

Joseph was told there was no room for him in the inn, so he went out to the stable. Joseph didn't get mad because they didn't have room for him.

We are so important, we wouldn't go anywhere unless we were invited. We're too big— got too much pride. Jesus said, "Zachaeus, I want to go home with you."

You can go anywhere you want to as long as you've got the right attitude. If you don't have the right attitude, I'd advise you to stay away from a lot of places. A lot of us blame it on the other fella; it may be because of our attitude.

You've got to have respect. Respect, I said! If you have respect for your fellow man you can get what you want— get anything you want and go anywhere you want.

If you live so that people will commend you— they'll not only commend you, but will love you, whether you are young or old. Why? Well, you'll deserve it!

Brother Keeble was human. He knew it was difficult to love when hated, yet he knew it was not impossible. Releasing himself to God thoroughly enough and long enough, Keeble was able to conquer the human nature and permit his heart to be loving rather than hating. Speaking these words, he encouraged others to do the same:

Love hides a multitude of sins. The reason it don't hide is because we don't have enough of it.

Love shed abroad is like riding on a puncture-proof tire. Love for your fellow man keeps your heart from being punctured when somebody does you wrong.

If a man hates me, I'll love him. If he don't want me, I'll leave him. If he needs me, I'll help him.

If you set your heart to love all men, you can, but we'll have to see a man right before we can love him. We may need to put on clean glasses.

Perhaps no man knew human nature better than Marshall Keeble. Knowing the nature of man, he gave wisdom by which one could love his fellow man and wisdom by which he could avoid hating his fellow man:

We need to shed love abroad to every man. Love will make you let somebody spit in your face. But somebody says, "I couldn't stand that!" If you go to hell, you'd be glad to let somebody spit in your face. You can't go to Heaven without loving your enemy.

Don't worry about somebody hating you and not loving you. God said, "I'll make your foes your footstool— I'll do it, not you." You don't know how to handle them. You'll make a mess out of it, so let God handle it.

When somebody bothers you— don't go over there with a razor or shotgun. Don't throw rocks at him. Don't burn down his house. Let God have him. He will knock him down.

We're proud of intelligence! America is going crazy on intelligence, but it may be imaginary intelligence. Intelligence is what makes you bear with your brother and love him, not hate and kill. If you don't have that kind of intelligence, no need talking about Heaven, you ain't goin' there no way.

Brother Keeble told about a time many years ago when he had seen two roosters fighting:

While the two roosters were fighting, one became completely exhausted and couldn't strike back. He put his head under the wing of the other rooster and followed the other rooster around 'til he gave down, and then he had a chance to strike back.

From this experience, brother Keeble drew this proverb:

Stay close to your enemy. He can't punch you then. Just wear him out. Go 'round and 'round with him— follow him around and do him good.

Brother Keeble's knowledge of God's will for man's life convinced him that loving and living— the right kind of living— went together. He always begged for clean living:

Don't kill the preacher's message by a ragged life.

We all have our Red Seas— our problem is, we want to open it up and go through instead of letting God open up the sea.

Serve God— live clean— you'll get it. God will see to it. He'll make your enemies your footstool and you can climb right on over. The world will give you what you deserve. You'll get it!

The Bible says, "Pure religion, before God, visit fatherless, and widows...in their *affliction* [audience began to laugh]. Now, you know them widows you've been a visiting ain't afflicted. Now you stop that...be pure.

If you live right and clean, you're worthy of respect of all men, and they'll give it to you. You'll get it—because you've earned it and now you deserve it. But you have to live right and you have to live clean.

We can live so filthy, yet we can be all dressed up in a clean shirt.

Live so that if anything bad is said about you, your friends won't believe it and your enemies can't prove it.

The power of living right is told by a woman who was baptized. After she was baptized, she went home and was knocked down five times by her husband. She lived long enough to see him laid away, but not before he was baptized. He was taught by the life she lived.

The Scriptures had taught brother Keeble that no man could love his fellow man and live a clean life without the Spirit of Christ. How often he emphasized this:

The poorer you are, the richer you are—rich in submission, rich in humility, rich in attention—you're willing to listen to God and that is what makes you rich. All we need now is not money, but the Spirit of Christ. If you've got the Spirit of Christ, you'll get the money. Without the Spirit of Christ, we wouldn't know how to spend it if we had it—maybe that is why we ain't got it.

John, you've baptized a lot of men—but never one like this Man. The Spirit of God in bodily form of a dove

lights on Him so John can know that this Man is different. He IS different, and we must be different—different from them all, we MUST have the Spirit of Christ in us.

Brother Keeble knew that with the Spirit of Christ, every man could live with any man anywhere under any circumstance at anytime. I have seen him do it!

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P.S. The white brethren are leading over half of the crowd every night in our long service.

Dear Sir, at Brown Christ. I hope you are well, and happy in Christ. We are starting off fine here, five responses, four baptisms, one restored, one was a fine white man, and the laus seems greatly edified. THANK GOD! I am greatly impressed with the way the school is starting off. It seems like we are headed for a great year. Richard is doing some good preaching and every day is impressed upon him, he is a fine sample of the school. All we need is more good samples to advertise the school. Three fine boys want to enroll at P.S. I after hearing Richard. I am praying for the school. Pray for us. Fraternally yours in Christ, J. Keeble. P.S. I appreciate your getting my wife's ears in a good working condition. THANKS

CHAPTER 11

THE BROKEN AND BLEEDING HEART— HIS GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT

Like any human, Marshall Keeble experienced many disappointments. Who hasn't? He was born to slave parents and reared in semi-poverty. When his first wife died, she left him with three children. He had to be both father and mother, until he found the loveable and lovely Laura, who helped him rear the children, and who supported him in all that he wanted to do for the Master. Brother Keeble saw all three of his children precede him in death.

Many people rejected Keeble because of his color. He was laughed at by others because of his "religion." Often he was called "Uncle Tom" by some of his own brethren. Sometimes he was hindered in his service for God because of both his color and his "religion."

Sadly, I would listen to brother Keeble tell of these concerns when we were alone. When some of these disappointments came from his heart, they came forth like a few "gushes"—others came forth like "great geysers." When he spoke of them, they always came from his voice with love. They fell from his lips with a quiver, and from his eyes like great fountains. His heart was beaten, burning, broken and bleeding. Yet, even these words do not paint a clear picture of the pain which he suffered.

One beautiful autumn Sunday morning Brother Keeble had spoken at Nashville's Jackson Street Church, his home congregation, at 11:00. Next, he was scheduled to speak at the War Memorial Auditorium, downtown, at 3:00 in the afternoon. Brother Keeble had looked forward to this occasion with great

eagerness and anticipation. He wanted to do his best, and he knew he would. He had confidence in God and in his brethren to help him. Knowing the brethren as he did, Keeble said, "They'll be there." And they were. Many young people were there. It was a special day—a special occasion.

Little did brother Keeble realize that it would be something more than a special day—a special occasion for God to be glorified. The thing that brother Keeble did not know was known by at least two of his brethren. One of these was sending a message and the other one was delivering it—"a message that was to crush him."

Brother Keeble and I arrived at the War Memorial Auditorium at 2:45 p.m. and were immediately ushered into a small side room where the messenger delivered the message. He said: "Brother _____ has said to tell you that you cannot extend the Lord's invitation at the end of your lesson." The look on brother Keeble's face was like the appearance of a dead man—he could not believe what he had heard. Brother Keeble had known both of these men for years. When Keeble asked his brother, "the messenger," to repeat what he had said, it was the same as before.

Brother Keeble was speechless. Finally, he said, "Are you sure? Do you really think this is the way we ought to do it? You know, I've never been told this before. I don't know how to handle this. Do you think we need to take a minute and pray about this, so we can see if we really ought to do it this way?" "The messenger" didn't pray. Finally, brother Keeble said, "I just can't do that." But the brother said firmly, "You must!"

We left the room just in time for the activities of the hour to begin. Brother Keeble sat quietly during the announcements and part of the singing. He had never done that before. He

always sang. How easy is it for a bruised and bleeding heart to sing? Oh, I know, Paul and Silas did, and their backs were beaten, broken and bleeding. Here is another of the Lord's servants in a similar situation— even placed in “stocks” so he could not do what he really wanted to do and what he knew it was best to do. As he sat there and spent those few silent moments, I know he must have prayed. He had prayed many times. Finally, his “hour” came. He spoke from the heart, but not with the same “zip,” “bounce,” and “punch”— not even with the same “crack” and “ring” in his voice— but he spoke. He was not the Marshall Keeble who would have spoken if there had been no restraint.

Finally, brother Keeble closed his message. He did not extend the Lord's invitation. He had been told not to. Then he sat down— it appeared he sat down with a “thud.” I'm sure he did, for his heart was heavy. What a disappointment he had suffered. Nothing pleased Marshall Keeble more than seeing souls turn to the Lord. He had seen it happen thousands of times. Surely he must have known in that vast audience there were souls who were not safe.

Yes, Marshall Keeble got the message from the messenger— all of it. Keeble delivered his message, but he did not deliver all of it. A part of that message remains unspoken and untold to this day— the Lord's invitation.

Brother Keeble and I left the auditorium and drove toward Smyrna, Tennessee. Brother Keeble was in a meeting at Smyrna, and he was to speak at the evening service. After a period of dead silence, brother Keeble began to pray aloud. “Dear Lord, I've let you down today. I let some men tell me what to do. I've made a mess of it. I'm sorry, and I'll never do it again. Lord, please forgive me.” Then his heart broke, his voice quivered, his eyes flowed like a fountain, and he could

speaking no more. After a few minutes, he continued his prayer. "Lord, I'm going to preach tonight. I'm going to do just what You want me to do. I promise. Please help me."

When brother Keeble began his lesson in Smyrna on that beautiful autumn day, he began by saying, "I feel more like preaching now than ever before...I'm nearly 90 years old. Most folks would say I'm too old, but I want to die on the battle field with the harness on. I want to die with the armor on, I want to preach Christ in season and out of season until I die."

He did— and NO MAN stopped him!

CHAPTER 12

FAMILY LIFE— HE KNEW GOD'S WAY

If asked to select an outstanding example of a family man, I would have to choose Marshall Keeble. This was a good and faithful man in every way. He was devoted to his dear wife, sister Laura Keeble, and he was good to his children, his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren. He was good to all of them and was always sensitive to their needs.

Brother Keeble knew that the Church would prosper if families were faithful in their living. Often he would speak concerning the needs of the family and he shared his bits of wisdom so family living could be more pleasant and profitable. Concerning marriage, he said:

You're looking for the best girl you can find to marry, but what is she looking for? If you live a hog's life—down in the mire all the time, what angel would want to lay down with a hog?

Don't marry one who is not a member of the church of Christ. You'll have trouble. Just don't marry— you have enough trouble with them that are members of the church of Christ.

You don't marry your wife to raise her, her Momma did that.

Purity of life was one of brother Keeble's great virtues. He knew that purity was important in family living. Brother Keeble's heart shared proverbs along the way so that every home could be blessed:



Marshall and Laura Keeble

My wife is the prettiest woman in the world— to me. I said to ME. Now, you thought I was going to tell a lie. I guess you think the same thing about yours. Just keep on thinking that and leave that other woman alone.

If you want purity in your own house, have it first in your own life.

That woman you're running around with won't give you water, even if you are sick, but your wife will sit up all night giving you medicine.

The wisdom of brother Keeble often revealed “little things” which would help in daily family living:

Don't sit down and gobble up your breakfast all mad at someone in your house. Why you couldn't go to Heaven if you wanted to—you can't go to Heaven mad.

Tell your wife that she makes good biscuits. If you'll just tell her that, she'll make better biscuits.

Vices and bad habits can destroy a home, and brother Keeble knew it. He also realized that money matters were important. Being a frugal, yet generous man, his heart deplored a situation where money was squandered and the family suffered. Many a time he has said:

The idea of a great big man not getting home with his paycheck! He acts like somebody takes it away from him. They don't take it away from him. He rolls dice, plays numbers and drinks it up.

Brother Marshall Keeble lived a disciplined life. There were many occasions where he would have to deal with those

who were undisciplined. Such experiences gave him proverbs to share:

Everything in the modern home is run with a switch, except the child. But there can be no improvement on God's plan— "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Hebrews 12:11). No! Nobody enjoys it, but it has to be done.

Parents who fail to discipline children are preparing them to be disciplined by society. They're headed for jail.

The one who has the keys runs the home. If you want to ruin your boy or girl, just give them the key and let them come and go when they want to, then you don't run the home— the one who has the key runs it.

In addition to his stand against divorce as he lectured publicly, Keeble often privately counseled those who were having marital problems and seemed headed for the divorce courts. In his preaching he would say:

Two people who are Christians should never get a divorce. Read I Corinthians 13. It is called the "love" chapter. Love will do and will not do certain things in any given situation. Every couple needs to take the love test, and if they'll study I Corinthians 13, they'll pass the test.

Brother Keeble knew that some were more difficult to live with than others; he also knew that it was easy for "the world" to come through the door. His counsel was:

The lion (devil) goes about roaring, but if you don't roar, he'll go on off. If you have the spirit of Christ in you, you can go into the den of lions, and they won't even bother you. We're in the den of lions every day. It seems that some folks have married a lion. But don't run off, stay in there and be kind and gentle, and you can tame that lion and make an angel out of it.

While brother Keeble deplored divorce, he also knew that divorces occurred. Knowing this, he said:

If any woman has a husband who is taken away from her by a little red-lipped girl, don't go and kill her, thank her— go look her up and thank her, cause you didn't have nothing no how.

One time, while preaching in Atlanta, Marshall Keeble's topic was marriage and divorce. A man sitting on the front row said, "Fix it— fix it, brother Keeble." Keeble replied, "I'm trying to— I'm trying to fix it, if you'll listen to what I'm saying, there won't be no more running after somebody else's wife, and nobody would run off and marry somebody else. Yes, brother, I am trying to fix it— really trying to fix it."

CHAPTER 13

HE LOVED THE LORD— HE LOVED LIFE

Marshall Keeble knew the Lord, he knew life, and he loved both. Being a happy man in Christ, he enjoyed living and working for his Lord— every day of life. Often Keeble would tell how good the Lord and life had been to him.

Daily, Keeble would receive his power from God— and Brother Keeble was a man of power. Whatever he did, he did mightily, for he knew he did it for the Lord. Believing that every day of life was a gift from God, Keeble would pray his prayers of thanksgiving and adoration. He was a man of prayer. He knew power came to him through prayer. He said,

Through the night I get up to pray. Nothing' to do but to pray— then go back to sleep. I get power from it. I beg Him to use me, to use me any way He wants to.

At age 88, brother Keeble said,

I get up in the middle of the night, just to thank God for letting me be alive. Most people my age are already dead, and here I am, still preaching the Gospel. Thank God!

Whenever brother Keeble and I had been out on an evening appointment and had arrived home, he was greeted at the door by his wife, the lovely Laura Keeble. He always said, “She lets me in.” Brother Keeble then would proceed to tell how they never went to bed until each had knelt and prayed.

In later years, brother Keeble would often arise during the night to seek the comforts of the bathroom. I would share the room with him and, each time he arose, I was awakened, though

he never knew that I was. Never would he get back into the bed until he had knelt by the bed and prayed.

After a very successful meeting with the brethren at the Church in Little Rock, Arkansas, we went home with brother and sister Paul McKnight, where we spent the night. Brother Keeble was given the front bedroom and, before we retired, we prayed together. Brother Keeble knelt at the foot of the bed and began his prayer, "Lord, we have all but seen your hand tonight...."

Later, sister McKnight wrote, "Brother Keeble was one of the most charming guests Paul and I ever had the privilege of having in our home."

Each year, brother Keeble spoke at the Freed-Hardeman College lectureship in Henderson, Tennessee. Some of the "preacher boys" always accompanied us. We would leave early in order to have breakfast with some of the brethren from the Oak Grove congregation near Henderson, which Brother Keeble had established many years earlier. After we were all seated in the automobile, and before starting our journey, I asked brother Keeble to pray. He said, "I've already prayed." We asked him to pray again, and he did. It was not that brother Keeble minded praying again, it was just simply his way of beginning a new day of life, which he loved.

Brother Keeble was invited to lead the "opening prayer" at a large meeting of our brethren. He received the invitation by letter and, in the letter, he was advised to limit his praying to one minute. This totally amazed brother Keeble. However, he put forth great effort to limit his prayer to one minute— simply because of the desire of the brethren. In fact, he even practiced the "one-minute prayer." One morning he came into my office, and while chatting, he told me that the night before he had

practiced the prayer. “Last night,” he said, “I handed my watch to Mama and asked her to time my prayer. She did.” I then inquired if he’d been able to meet the deadline, and he said, “I think I can make it. I believe if I can get through [in one minute], I can get through [to God].”

Obviously, brother Keeble wasn’t accustomed to praying in minutes. He prayed often— many times for hours. He prayed “without ceasing”— he was always in the spirit and attitude of prayer.

As were his prayers, so was his joy— joy in Christ and happiness in life. Keeble’s wit and humor abounded in endless amounts.

Brother Keeble and I were in Cleburne, Texas. We spent the night in the home of brother and sister John Featherstone, who had recently returned from a period of service in Nigeria. While brother Keeble was in the bathroom preparing for bed, I turned the cover down on his bed, then turned the cover down on mine and climbed into the bed. When he returned, I was lying in bed, with one leg propped up and the other crossed. He asked, “Son, what are you doing?” I said, “I’m just lying here relaxing and visiting with the Lord.” Quickly, brother Keeble asked, “Like that? The Lord ain’t going to accept nothing that relaxed. Get up and get out of that bed and let me show you how to pray.”

I climbed out of bed, he instructed me to get down on my knees beside the bed, he did the same, and we prayed together. Yes, he was a man of prayer, praying fervently for hours. The disciples of the Lord said “teach us to pray.” As a student of Marshall Keeble, I was also taught to pray.

Someone has said the most unlearned man can ask questions which the most intelligent man cannot answer. That may

be so in some cases, but it never seemed so when Marshall Keeble was asked questions.

One person asked if we would know each other in Heaven. Keeble replied, "I'll know my Saviour. I'll know my brother. I would hate to think I'd have less sense in Heaven than I got now."

A Methodist preacher, listening to brother Keeble preach, interrupted the message and asked, "What's the Greek on Acts 2:38?" Brother Keeble said,

I thought he had me, and he did for a minute, but finally, I asked the audience, "How many of you here know Greek?" No one raised their hand. Then I asked the fella, "Why should I speak in Greek, when nobody here could understand it?" I want the Gospel "shelled"— not in the "hull," so I let the scholars "hull" it, and I give it to them "shelled."

Brother Keeble was in a debate concerning instrumental music. His opponent made a great mistake. One night, the gentleman said, "Why, we could stack pianos from here to Heaven, and it wouldn't hurt a thing." Brother Keeble came right back and told the audience, "Now, I'm not concerned about STACKING pianos, I'm concerned about PLAYING the piano."

Answering questions in rapid fire order was easy for Marshall Keeble. It seemed the answers came without any thought.

At one of his meetings, brother Keeble had a question box, and he answered the questions prior to beginning his lesson of the evening. This question was asked, "What happened to Job's turkey?" Brother Keeble answered, "From the looks of this scratching, he's still alive."

Brother Keeble and I were in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he spoke at the University Church. After the meeting was over, brother Keeble and others were standing down front when a man walked up and greeted him. He told brother Keeble his name and said he had heard him preach fifty years ago when he and his wife were living in Alabama. The man asked brother Keeble, "Do you remember me?" Keeble replied, "I don't know." The man said, "Well, I remember what you preached about— do you remember telling about the old sow and pigs?" Keeble answered, "I do remember that old sow and pigs, but I don't remember you."

Brother Keeble spoke at the lectureship of Michigan Christian College. After the lecture, brother Keeble, several preachers and their wives, were invited to the home of brother and sister Lucien Palmer. While the ladies were preparing treats, the men were sitting in the den chatting. One of the preachers, who had lived and preached in the Detroit area for a number of years but who was presently preaching in another state, was one of the lecture speakers. He remarked that as you work with people, they get awfully close to you, even the women, and sometimes to the point that it becomes embarrassing when you go back to visit, because they want to hug and kiss you. Someone asked brother Keeble if he ever had that problem, and he replied, "Yeah, I do." The preacher asked him, "Well, how do you handle it?" Brother Keeble answered, "I just stand still 'til they get through."

Traveling with brother Keeble brought forth unexpected lectures, lessons and remarks. Brother Keeble and I had been in Bloomington, Indiana, where he spoke to the congregation. We spent the night in the home of one of the brethren, and the next morning the brother drove us around the city, showing us various things, including his business. Later, while leaving

Bloomington, we passed a building which was obviously some type of religious building. The architecture of the building attracted one's attention. Brother Keeble asked me, "What kind of church is that?" I had not seen any sign with any information, so I replied, "I don't know." We came to an intersection, and after turning on to the main highway headed for Terre Haute, there was a large sign bearing the name "St. Mark's Methodist Church." I told brother Keeble, "That's St. Mark's Methodist Church." Immediately brother Keeble told me, "Son, wait a minute, wait-a-minute! You know that St. Mark never had a church. Don't you ever let me hear you say that again." And I never did.

It was on that same journey from Bloomington, Indiana, to Terre Haute, Indiana, that we had the radio turned on for brother Keeble to receive the news. He was always interested in world events. After the news was over, the station began broadcasting music. The music stayed on for awhile, and later I turned off the radio. After driving a few miles, brother Keeble asked, "Son, what happened to your radio? Isn't it about time for the news?" I replied to brother Keeble, "I turned it off. I didn't want to listen to all that jungle jazz." In order to be sure that we did not miss the news, I turned the radio on again and the music continued. It wasn't long until brother Keeble looked at me and said, "Son, you're right— that music is not good for an old man."

Brother Keeble was blessed with a long life which gave him time to mature spiritually and physically. However, he never got "the boy" out of the man. He enjoyed baseball, and we would often listen to the baseball game being broadcast by radio as we drove along. When a game was televised, he wanted to see it. He loved to watch Bob Gibson, of the St. Louis Cardinals, pitch. He admired Gibson's speed and accu-

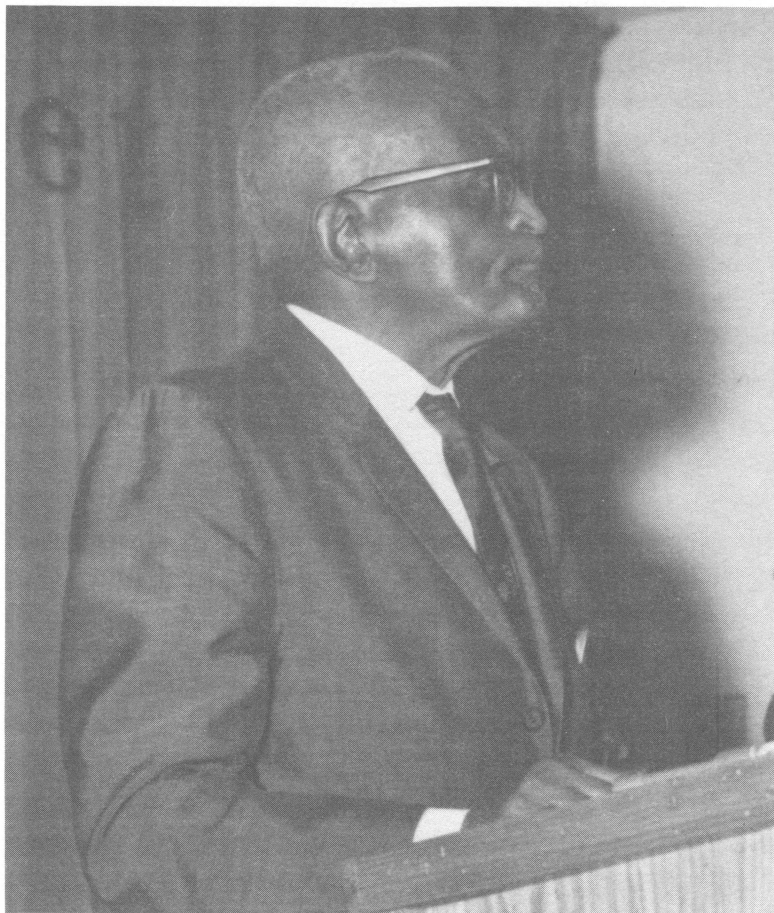
racy. One night, while returning from Memphis, Tennessee, we were listening to the Atlanta Braves game. The pitcher that evening for the Braves was Phil Niekro. The announcer kept referring to "Niekro." Over and over brother Keeble heard the name "Niekro." Not being acquainted with the name, he asked me, "Is that broadcaster saying, 'Negro'?" I explained that the name of the pitcher was Phil Niekro, N-I-E-K-R-O. He loved sports and was attentive to the events that took place in the game.

When the circus came to Nashville, I asked, "Brother Keeble, would you like to go to the circus?" He replied, "Do you suppose the brethren would find out about it?"

I assured him that we would tell no one. Brother Keeble chuckled and said, "In that case, let's go." We did, and it appeared to me that brother Keeble saw all three rings of that circus at the same time.

As brother Keeble grew older, he sometimes used the opportunity to put a bit of wit in his references to his age. While in Indianapolis, he and I stayed in the home of a dear widow who was a member of the Church. Each morning, she prepared our breakfast. On this particular morning, brother Keeble had eaten heartily and had asked for a second helping of bacon. The lady had not prepared enough for a second helping, so she went to the kitchen and prepared more bacon. Returning to serve it to brother Keeble, she said, "Brother Keeble, you've got a mighty good appetite for an old man." He responded rapidly, "I'm not an old man, I'm just 87 years old."

One time an elderly lady asked, "Brother Keeble, how do you get around so well?" Brother Keeble said, "If you got the Gospel, it's in your joints and in the marrow. It'll make you jump around."



The above picture was made while Keeble was speaking at Michigan Christian College in Rochester, Michigan on April 17, 1968. This is the last known photograph of Marshall Keeble.

On another occasion, while greeting several ladies at a lectureship, one said to him, “Brother Keeble, you sure do remain mighty active. Every time I see you, you’re getting around like a young man.” To this he replied,

I run with young folks. That’s how I do it. If I hung around you old folks, I’d have arthritis, neuritis, bursitis and all of the “itis” pains. Why, I couldn’t even get around. As it is, I can go around the world.

And that is just what Marshall Keeble did— at the age of 83 he went around the world with Lucien Palmer and Houston Ezell. He did it for the Lord and with joy, loving both the Lord and life.

CHAPTER 14

THE MAN KEEBLE— MY JOY AND BLESSING

I've been asked many times, "How did you come to know Marshall Keeble? How did you come to work with him?"

It all began in 1959. Brother J.W. Brents, a long-time preacher and former minister to the Otter Creek Church of Christ in Nashville, Tennessee, was teaching Bible at Nashville Christian Institute. Otter Creek had a part in his work at that time. My family and I moved to Nashville in order to work with the Christians at Otter Creek. Shortly after my arrival, brother Brents asked the elders to permit me to teach Bible at Nashville Christian Institute. They granted this request, allowing me to teach an early morning Bible class, with the understanding that I would return immediately to the church office to prepare myself for the teaching program of the congregation.

At approximately the same time two other events were occurring which would play a great part in my association with Marshall Keeble. First, in Tennessee, brother E. Lucien Palmer, who had recently returned from a mission in Nigeria, was appointed president of Nashville Christian Institute. Meanwhile, brother Otis Gatewood, former missionary to Germany, was asked to serve as president of Michigan Christian College in Rochester, Michigan, which was in the early stages of its development. Brother Gatewood would accept the appointment only if brother Palmer would serve as dean of the college.

Brother Palmer agreed, and upon his resignation, brother Athens Clay Pullias, President of David Lipscomb College, asked that I visit with him and brother A.M. Burton, a prominent Nashville businessman and member of the Church. They

were both on the Board of Directors of the Institute, and they requested that I serve as president of NCI in brother Palmer's place. That call came on November 11, 1959. I began full-time work with Nashville Christian Institute in January, 1960.

This was the "launch pad" of a life with unique experiences and blessings. Brother Keeble had formerly served as President of the school and was now President Emeritus. My appointment to work with him in the position he formerly held was graciously received by brother Keeble. He immediately treated me as if I were a son. I treated him as a father. It did not take me long to understand why those who were so closely associated with brother Keeble called him "Pop." It was easy for me to do the same.

Early in our work, he became my "personal tutor," as well as my very close and intimate co-worker. He often told me, "I'm under there with you. If I'm with you, I'll go down with you—if you go up, I'll go up with you." He never ceased his efforts to see that the work of Christian education progressed. He constantly told me, "Use me while you've got me."

I have known no man like Marshall Keeble. He was a man of no bad habits. His heart was pure, and that purity was clearly revealed. His heart never poured out any "bad words" or bitterness. I never heard him say aught against any man. Never did he speak negatively about any congregation of God's children. Keeble's heart was a fountain of sweetness.

When brother Keeble was 18, he heard Booker T. Washington speak at the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, Tennessee. Washington used a familiar phrase, "Let down your bucket where you are." When brother Keeble spoke of this speech, he always said, "Since then, I've been letting my bucket down." By many standards, brother Keeble did not receive

much formal education. However, he was constantly filling his “bucket.



Prayer and Bible study were important parts of Keeble's life.

Marshall Keeble was a man of good judgment, daily seeking wisdom from above. He studied the Scriptures, permitting Christ to direct his life.

There were many occasions when brother Keeble would tell something about his father-in-law, brother S.W. Womack. He enjoyed telling how brother Womack permitted him to speak before a congregation. He said, “Brother Womack put me up at Jackson Street to preach my first sermon. My mother-

in-law didn't like it a bit. When she and brother Womack got home from church, she told him, 'That boy won't make a preacher as long as Heaven's happy'." Brother Keeble never told that without a chuckle.

In relating his "formal training" as a preacher, he said, "When I first started preaching, I was driving a horse and wagon. I'd go into the stall and preach to my horse. I'm glad it was him, for he didn't have sense enough to laugh at me. This way, I could hear myself and correct myself."

Brother Keeble felt there were "two sides" to his preaching. He attributed these traits to two great Gospel preachers who influenced and assisted him in his early days of preaching. The first was his father-in-law, brother S.W. Womack. He would say, "Brother S.W. Womack was meek, humble, and when he got in a tight spot, he slowed down. That's where I got that part of me."

Brother Alexander Campbell, one of the early preachers among the black brethren, was the other person who influenced brother Keeble's preaching. He would say, "Alexander Campbell was boisterous, rough, not too much, but enough. He could preach rough when it was needed. If somebody jumped on him, he jumped back. That's where I got that part of me."

When Marshall Keeble preached, those who heard him knew he believed what he preached. They knew he loved what he preached. And they knew that he knew the Bible was right. Brother Keeble often said,

**A man in his sins is as ragged as a barrel of sauerkraut.
Therefore, we must preach the Gospel! And live the
Gospel! And somebody will obey it!**

His Hand and Heart

When brother Keeble preached in a certain meeting, a man whose life had been “ragged” obeyed the Gospel. His life was changed. Brother Keeble was later called upon to preach his funeral. He began the oration with this statement:

When I came to this city, brother _____ nearly broke up the meeting. He was wild. He took delight in disturbing the Church, but when he quit sinning, he really quit sinning. That is a lot of our problem, we don't really quit sinning.

Here was a case where the Gospel was preached and lived, and someone obeyed it.

When brother Keeble stretched a tent and preached the Gospel with power, great crowds assembled. It attracted a lot of attention and brother Keeble knew what tent preaching did. He said, “It's just plain curious for some folks, and so they come out of curiosity. But what happens? They get caught.”

After people came out of curiosity and finally obeyed the Gospel, they would often go back and tell brother Keeble their first impressions.

A man told me one time, “The first time I heard you, I could've laid a brick up beside your head.” I asked him, “Well, why didn't you?” He said, “I wanted to wait and see what else you would say.” He did wait. He listened while he waited, and I baptized him into Christ.

A white man in Florida said he didn't want to hear no Negro preach the Gospel. His friend asked him to go just one night. He did, and his friend had to take him every night. He forgot what color I was. He got his eye on God. You can preach the Gospel until folks forget

what color you are. They get their minds off of you and on to God.

Brother Arleigh Brogden, who served as an elder in the Olive Street congregation in Marietta, Georgia, attributed his understanding of the plan of salvation to the preaching of brother Keeble. He first heard the Gospel in 1930 when brother Keeble and brother Luke Miller, a former student who led singing during Keeble's meetings, were in a six-weeks meeting in Valdosta, Georgia. The meeting lasted from May through June. Brother Brogden did not obey the Gospel at that time. He was later baptized in February, 1931, at the Central congregation in Valdosta. Although he was baptized by brother A.B. Lipscomb, he admitted that brother Keeble taught him the Truth.

The brethren in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, were stretching the tent where brother Keeble would do the preaching, when a white man walked up and said to brother Keeble that the Negro is not a nation, and God said to preach the Gospel to every nation. Brother Keeble explained to the man that God also said to preach the Gospel to every creature, and that the reason God said "creature" is because people are so mixed up they don't know what nation they are. He told the man, "If we miss them in nation, we'll catch them in creature."

The older Keeble became, the more he spoke of his desire to live for the Lord and to serve Him. At age 84, he said, "No need of anybody getting jealous of me. I won't be around here long. But if God can use me in my last days, I'll certainly rejoice."

And God used him until the last day.

Again, at age 84, while speaking of good works and faithfulness, brother Keeble said,

His Hand and Heart

The Lord will bless you. It may be right down at the end where you need it the worst. If I ever needed His blessings, I need them now. And I'm going to serve Him so I can get His blessings.

When brother Keeble was 85, someone asked him if he wasn't happiest while in a tent preaching the Gospel for thirty days at a time. Brother Keeble said,

No, I'm happiest right now. I've worked all my life for this. Many people suffer in the last part of their lives, but I suffered in the first part of my life. For 25 or 30 years, I served and suffered. I didn't know why then, but I do now. I was laying up treasures in Heaven.

In January of 1968, it was necessary for brother Keeble to be hospitalized due to a diabetic reaction. He came home, and on Thursday, February 8, I talked to brother Keeble by phone. Among other things, he told me,

I know God's hand in the dark. I lay here and rejoice. I've tried to serve Him, and the Lord's been mighty good to me. I'm not complaining, I'm not fretted, I'm not worried, I'm not anything, just rejoicing.

I still long for a faith like that.

Brother Keeble was once asked if he were going to Heaven, and he quickly replied, "Yeah, I've got my bags packed— I keep 'em packed."

Due to the manner in which he directed his hand and disciplined his heart while he lived upon the face of the earth, I'm sure that he kept his bags packed.

Brother A.V. Isbell, former President of Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas, said in a meeting in Dallas,

The Man Keeble— My Joy and Blessing

“One of the reasons I want to go to Heaven is to be with Marshall Keeble.” Another brother remarked that he would like to live next door to brother Keeble when he got to Heaven.

Seeing Marshall Keeble in Heaven will be a great joy for me. I can almost see him at the gate with his hand outstretched saying, “Well, son, I’m glad to see you. Come on in!”



“Come on in!”

Marshall Keeble, my friend, brother, “father,” encourager, counselor, co-worker, example, teacher, God’s great servant—what memories!

His Hand and Heart

His cooperative spirit— never refused!

His generous spirit— gave all!

His pleasant spirit— never gave up!

His loving spirit— extended to all!

His obedient spirit— did the Father's will!

Someone once asked, "What made Keeble great?" I immediately began to reflect on his many great and noble traits of character, when a thought entered my mind like thunder and lightning— "The thing that made Marshall Keeble great was that NO BODY and NO THING mastered him, except the Master Himself."

Mr Willie T. Gato.

801

24th Ave, N.Y.

11-8-67.

Asheville, N.C.

Dear Sir, and Bro. in Christ
Many thanks to you for your
kindness to me, in a little
trip to N.C. and Bro. Johnson as
at the Air Port to me.
I am in a fine meeting in
really high, all I need in you.
Interest is high.

We are holding the meeting
in the white church Build-
ing, over 900 present in
the first service. up to
date I have responded
and 2 of them colored.

Out look is good. Nov-17
if the Lord Will.

Pray for us,
I am holding everything
open for the Birthday
Program as you suggested.
If the Lord Will. I will
be 89. THANK GOD.

Pray for me.
I hope to do all the good I can
before the master calls me home. SMILE
Phone 8482771 1560 West 33rd St
Riverside Beach, Fla.
33404